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TALES FROM THE TOMB

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CARL BURGOS, Editor IRVING FASS, Art Director
EZRA JACKSON, Art Editor

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MONSTER OF EVIL
CAN AN ANCIENT EVIL LIVE THROUGH THE CENTURIES? ALMOST 4000 YEARS AGO SCREAMING VICTIMS BY THE HORDES DIED IN MOLOCH'S EMBRACE TO SATE THE BLOODLUST OF THE BULL-HEADED DESTROYER OF LIFE! NOW IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, THE FEARSOME FIGURE STIRRED TO LIFE-- UNTIL THE VERY EARTH SHOOK WITH HORROR OF THE GREAT ONE'S RAGE!

ANCIENT PHOENICIA WAS THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE MOST HORRIBLE PAGAN RITES IN HISTORY-- THE WORSHIP OF MOLOCH, DESTROYER OF LIFE!

AT ONE TIME 20,000 PRISIONERS OF WAR WERE SACRIFICED IN AN ORGY OF SLAUGHTER!

NOT ALL TEMPLES FELL! SOME WERE SPIRITED AWAY IN THE NIGHT!
HURRY SCUM OF THE EARTH! WE MUST BE OVER THE HORIZON BEFORE THE ROOSTER CROWS!

EZBAAL, THE QEDESHIM, OR HIGH PRIEST OF MOLOCH, WAS CAUGHT AND HANGED!
FOUL BARBARIANS! HEAR ME! LORD MOLOCH WILL RISE ONE DAY AND DESTROY THE EARTH!
BUT YOU WON'T BE AROUND TO SEE IT, BURNER OF BABIES! UP WITH THE DOG!

ALMOST 2,000 YEARS LATER, A CABIN SEA-PLANE DRONED OVER A TINY FORGOTTEN ISLAND OFF THE COAST OF SYRIA...
THERE'S YOUR EZBAAL ISLAND, DR. MORGAN! IT'S NO MORE THAN A VOLCANIC CONE... AND NOT DEAD EITHER! SEE THAT SMOKE!

IT CAN'T ERUPT NOW! I'VE SPENT TOO MANY YEARS HUNTING CLUES TO THE LOST TEMPLE OF MOLOCH, ALAN!
ALAN ISN'T INTERESTED IN ANYTHING BUT FLYING, UNCLE MORGAN! HE CAN'T APPRECIATE YOUR EXCITEMENT!

I CAN APPRECIATE ANYTHING THAT INTERESTS YOU, LELIA!
ALAN LOGAN, YOU STICK TO YOUR FLYING! I'M HERE TO TRANSLATE CUNEIFORM INSCRIPTIONS!

HOW ODD! THERE ISN'T A SOUL IN SIGHT!
LISTEN! ISN'T THAT THE SOUND OF CHANTING!
AH-AH-AH AH-AH

LOOK! FAR UP THE MOUNTAIN, THERE-- SOMETHING GLOWING!
IT'S MOLOCH-- A MONSTROUS STATUE OF MOLOCH! FASTER! WE MAY SEE AN ANCIENT SACRIFICIAL CEREMONY!

FROM WHAT LELA TOLD ME, THAT CEREMONY ISN'T EXACTLY PUBLIC! WE'D BETTER WATCH FOR GUARDS!
THAT CHANTING HID THE SOUND OF THE PLANE! IT WILL COVER OUR STEPS!

MOMENTS LATER, THEY BURST ONTO AN INCREDIBLE SCENE...
BROTHER! AM I SEEING THINGS?
THE RITES OF MOLOCH! ALAN, THESE MUST BE DESCENDANTS OF ANCIENT PHOENICIANS WHO BROUGHT THEIR TEMPLE HERE TO HIDE IT!

SHH! WATCH EVERY DETAIL, LELA! IF WE'RE DISCOVERED THEY WOULD TEAR US TO BITS!
OR FEED US TO THAT MONSTER!

SUDDENLY, OUT OF THE SHIFTING SHADOWS...
OH... THEY'RE GOING TO SACRIFICE A GIRL! WE MUST STOP THEM!
QUIET, LELA! WHAT CAN WE DO AGAINST THAT MOB?

ARE YOU INSANE? I CAN DO SOMETHING...
WAIT, YOU FOOL!
STOP! LET GO OF THAT GIRL!

BEASTLY BUTCHERS!
AHHHHH! AN INTRUDER! MOLOCH DESTROY HIM!
ALAN! LOOK OUT!

I'LL HANDLE THIS!
EEEEEE! UNCLE MORGAN!

QUIET, LELA! THIS IS THE ONLY WAY TO SAVE OUR NECKS!
HOLD! I AM A GREATER QECHIM THAN YOUR PRIESTS! I WAS SENT BY GREAT MOLOCH HIMSELF TO REWARD YOUR AGES OF FAITH!

WHO STRUCK DOWN THE DESECRATOR OF YOUR FAITH! I DID! HEED ME, AND KNOW THAT GREATER REWARDS LIE AHEAD FOR YOU!
ALAN, DARLING! ALAN, WAKE UP! UNCLE MORGAN WAS ONLY TRYING TO SAVE US!
OOOOo!

IF YOU ARE FROM MOLOCH, WHERE IS THE SACRIFICE? THE GIRL IS GONE...
BUT SEE-- I HAVE FELLED THIS MAN AS YOUR GREATER SACRIFICE!

UNCLE MORGAN, ARE YOU MAD? THAT'S ALAN! YOU CAN'T GIVE HIM TO THOSE BEASTS!
MY DEAR LELA, THIS IS OUR ONLY HOPE! WE'D ALL BURN THERE IF I DIDN'T OFFER THEM A SACRIFICE!
YOU RAT!

ALAN! ALAN...!
BUT THE FAVORITE SACRIFICE OF MOLOCH IS A GIRL!
THEN WHY DO YOU WAIT? YOU HAVE THE GIRL IN YOUR GRASP!

YOU MADMAN! THAT'S YOUR OWN NIECE YOU'RE CONDEMNING TO HORRIBLE DEATH!
CHAIN THEM IN THE SACRIFICIAL PEN! MOLOCH WILL APPRECIATE MY GREAT SACRIFICE!

HE'S MAD... MAD! MY OWN UNCLE!
COURAGE, LELA! WE'RE NOT DEAD YET!

THROUGH THE LONG NIGHT THEY CROUCHED IN THEIR PRISON, HEARING THE TRIUMPHANT CHANTING OF THE CROWD OUTSIDE!
HEAR THAT, ALAN? THEY'VE STOPPED!
MAYBE YOUR UNCLE HAS FINALLY PERSUADED THEM HE'S A BOSS-PRIEST!

WITH THE SUNRISE...
DR. MORGAN! YOU'VE WON THEM OVER! WE'LL BE FREED NOW...
DON'T BE SILLY, THE ONLY WAY I COULD WIN THEM WAS BY PROMISING TWO HUMAN SACRIFICES!

YOU FOOLS! THE EARLY RECORDS SHOW THE TEMPLE OF MOLOCH HAD ORNAMENTS VALUED AT A HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS!
YOU DIRTY RAT!

WHEN I WIN THEIR CONFIDENCE, THEY'LL SHOW ME WHERE THE TREASURES ARE HIDDEN!
SINCE MY FATHER LEFT ME ALL THE MONEY, YOU'VE ALWAYS RESENTED ME!

THE GIRL AND THE MAN ARE LIKE MY OWN CHILDREN! BUT I WILL GLADLY OFFER THEM TO MOLOCH!
IF THEY DIE TONIGHT, WE WILL BOW TO YOU AS OUR HIGH PRIEST!

NOW I KNOW WHY CERTAIN INSCRIPTIONS HE FOUND WERE HIDDEN FROM ME! HE'S BEEN AFTER THIS TREASURE FOR YEARS!
DON'T WORRY, LELA! WE'LL FIND A WAY TO GET OUT OF THIS!

THROUGH THE LONG DAY THEY MADE AND DISCARDED A HUNDRED HOPELESS PLANS FOR ESCAPE!
IT ALL ADDS UP TO THE SAME, HONEY... EVEN IF WE BREAK AWAY, WE'VE GOT A MOB AGAINST US! WE NEVER REACH MY PLANE!
IT'S HOPELESS, BUT... ALAN! THAT NOISE... LIKE THUNDER!

WHAT'S HAPPENING?
AN EARTHQUAKE! THAT VOLCANO MUST REALLY BE COMING TO LIFE!

LOOK! THE WHOLE WALL HAS CRACKED OPEN!
WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR? COME ON...

MOVE IT OR LOSE IT, BROTHER!
THE EARTHQUAKE IS DYING OUT ALAN! IT GAVE US OUR CHANCE!

MOLOCH IS ANGRY! IT MUST BE BECAUSE WE LISTENED TO YOU!
FOOLS! MOLOCH IS BUT TRYING TO WARN YOU THAT YOUR VICTIMS ARE ESCAPING!

IT'S HOPELESS! THE PEOPLE ARE GUARDING THE WAY TO THE PLANE, ALAN!
I'M NOT LICKED UNTIL I'M DEAD! BACK TO THE TEMPLE!

ALAN, ARE YOU MAD, TOO? WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
SHH! IF THAT SKUNK CAN BLUFF THESE DOPES, I CAN TRY A BLUFF OF MY OWN!

IT WAS MAD, DESPERATE GAMBLE...
WAIT! HAVEN'T YOU HAD WARNING ENOUGH? MOLOCH HIMSELF SHOOK THE EARTH!
FOOLS! DON'T LISTEN TO HIM! SEIZE HIM!

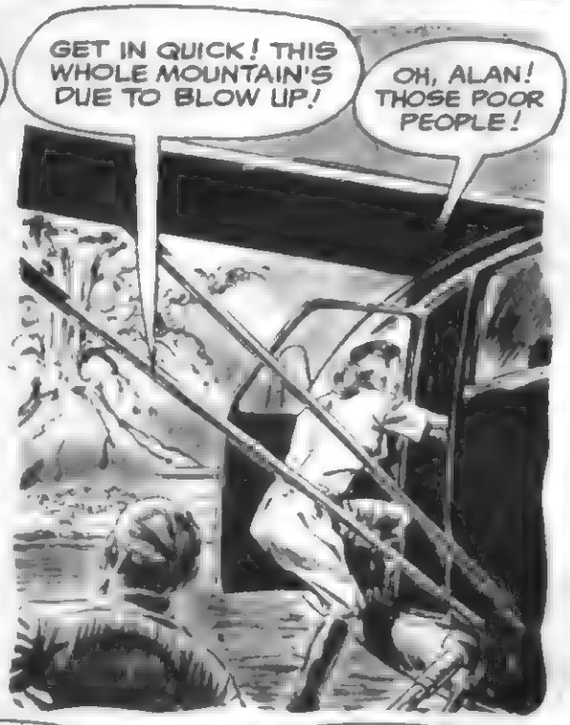
EVEN AS THEY STARED THE MONSTROUS STATUE GLOWED RED, THEN WHITE WITH HEAT!

BUT... BUT ALAN, THERE WAS NO FIRE IN THE FIRE PIT BEFORE!
THE LAVA IS BURSTING OUT FROM THE VOLCANO! IT CAME UP THROUGH THE PIT!

THE GROUND IS SHAKING AGAIN!
THE MOUNTAIN IS READY FOR A BIG BLOW-OFF! RUN LELA!

EAAAAAAA! MOLOCH POURS HIS VENGEANCE FROM THE EARTH!

HALT! YOU ARE THE APPOINTED SACRIFICE... AGHHH!
WE'VE JUST BEEN DIS-APPOINTED!


GET IN QUICK! THIS WHOLE MOUNTAIN'S DUE TO BLOW UP!
OH, ALAN! THOSE POOR PEOPLE!

LELA! THOSE "POOR PEOPLE" HAD GENERATIONS OF TRAINING IN HUMAN SACRIFICE! THIS IS THE BEST FINISH!
THAT GREAT TREASURE THAT DROVE MY UNCLE MAD... IT MUST BE DOWN THERE, TOO!

OH, THOSE POOR, HELPLESS PEOPLE! HOW HORRIBLE!
SKIP THAT, HONEY! FOR US, THERE'S A NEW LIFE AHEAD! FOR THEM, THERE'S THE END THAT HAD TO COME!
The End

JOHN SUTTON HAD THREE WISHES--THREE WISHES THAT WERE WILLED TO HIM BY A STRANGE MAN WHO SEEMED FROM ANOTHER TIME...AND

HE ROSE FROM THE GRAVE

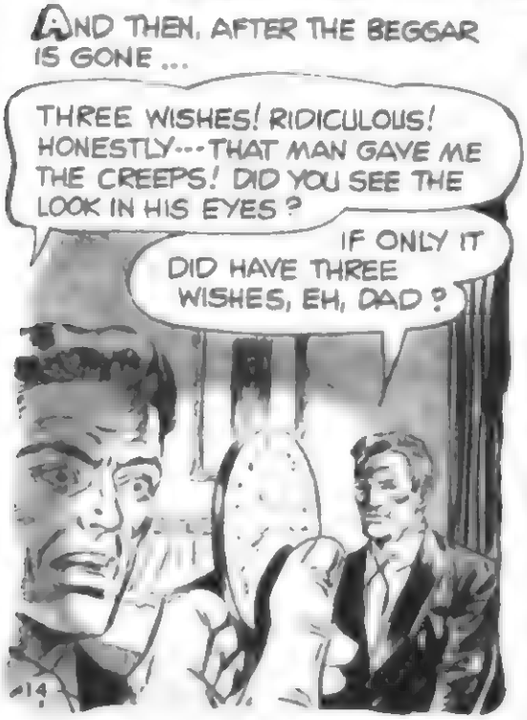
IT IS AN ORDINARY EVENING WHEN JOHN SUTTON SITS DOWN FOR HIS MEAL WITH HIS WIFE AND ONLY SON. AND THEN THEIR DOG BEGINS TO BARK IN A FRENZIED MANNER...

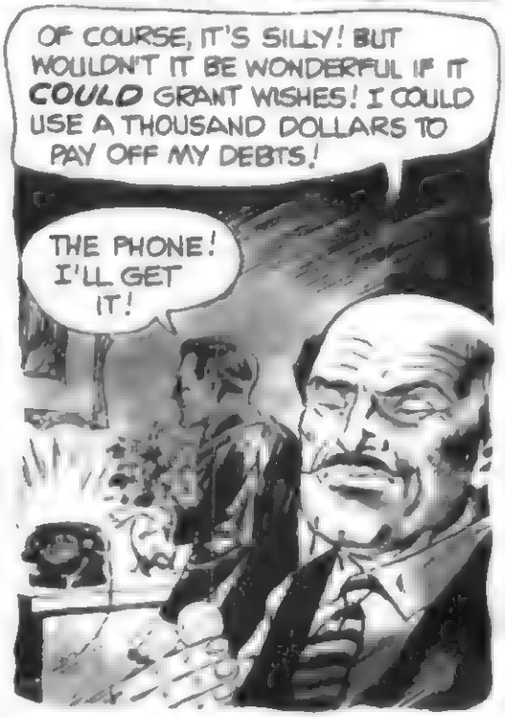
AS YOU WISH, GOOD SIR!
WAIT A MINUTE! I GUESS WE CAN SPARE SOMETHING! COME ON IN!

WITHOUT A WORD, THE STRANGE BEGGAR SLITHERED INTO THE HOUSE AND PARTOOK OF THE MEAL....

YOU'RE DRESSED RATHER STRANGELY.. ..WHERE DO YOU COME FROM?
FROM EVERYWHERE! PLEASE ALLOW ME TO REPAY YOU FOR YOUR KINDNESS!

TAKE THIS COIN AND KNOW THAT IT CONTAINS THREE WISHES---THRE.. WISHES THAT ARE YOURS FOR THE ASKING!

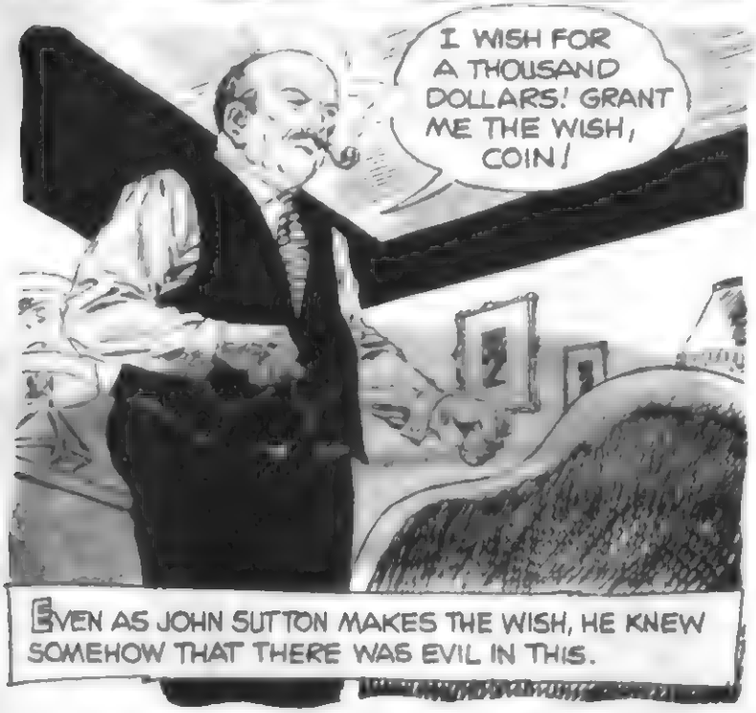

AND THEN, AFTER THE BEGGAR IS GONE...
THREE WISHES! RIDICULOUS! HONESTLY---THAT MAN GAVE ME THE CREEPS! DID YOU SEE THE LOOK IN HIS EYES?
IF ONLY IT DID HAVE THREE WISHES, EH, DAD?


OF COURSE, IT'S SILLY! BUT WOULDN'T IT BE WONDERFUL IF IT COULD GRANT WISHES! I COULD USE A THOUSAND DOLLARS TO PAY OFF MY DEBTS!
THE PHONE! I'LL GET IT!

I'VE GOT TO RUN! IT'S AN EMERGENCY! THEY NEED ALL THE VOLUNTEER FIREMEN THEY CAN GET!
WHY YOU EVER JOINED THE VOLUNTEERS IS BEYOND ME!

ALONE WITH HIS WIFE, JOHN STARES AT THE COIN...
WILL YOU STOP GAPING AT THAT SILLY COIN AND COME TO BED!
I WILL SOON...

WHY NOT MAKE A WISH? THERE'S NO HARM IN TRYING!


I WISH FOR A THOUSAND DOLLARS! GRANT ME THE WISH, COIN!
EVEN AS JOHN SUTTON MAKES THE WISH, HE KNEW SOMEHOW THAT THERE WAS EVIL IN THIS.

AIEE! IT... IT MOVED... AND BURNT MY PALM!

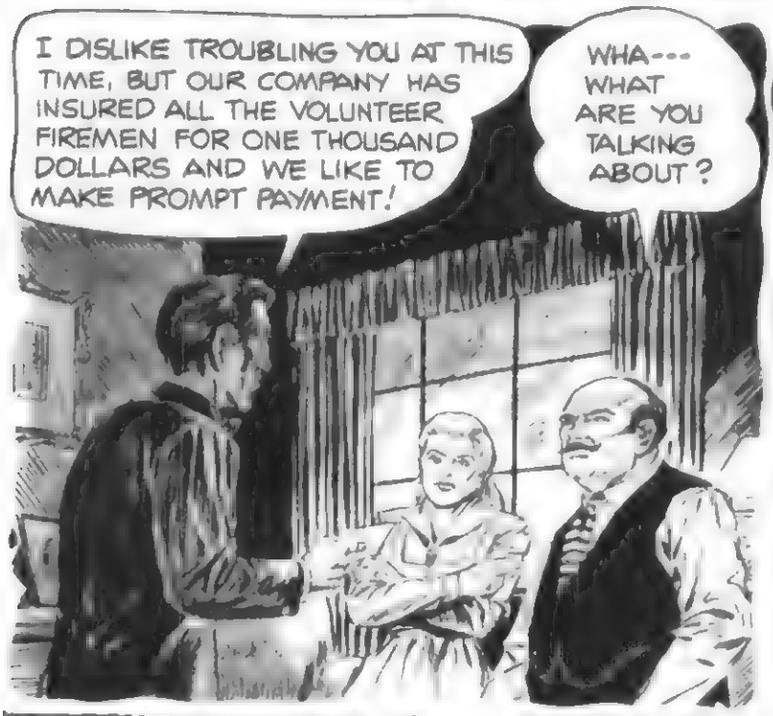
.... THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!

IT--IT'S COOL NOW-- JUST AS IT WAS BEFORE! CURSE THAT BEGGAR!

THE FOLLOWING MORNING, JOHN TELLS HIS WIFE OF THE COIN'S STRANGE BEHAVIOR...
OF ALL THE SILLY THINGS! MAKING WISHES WITH SOME WORTHLESS COIN!....WHERE IS TOM?
I'LL CALL HIM!

HE'S NOT IN HIS ROOM AND HIS BED HASN'T BEEN SLEPT IN!
THAT FIRE---! HE WENT TO LAST NIGHT!

THAT MUST BE HIM!


I DISLIKE TROUBLING YOU AT THIS TIME, BUT OUR COMPANY HAS INSURED ALL THE VOLUNTEER FIREMEN FOR ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS AND WE LIKE TO MAKE PROMPT PAYMENT!
WHA--- WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

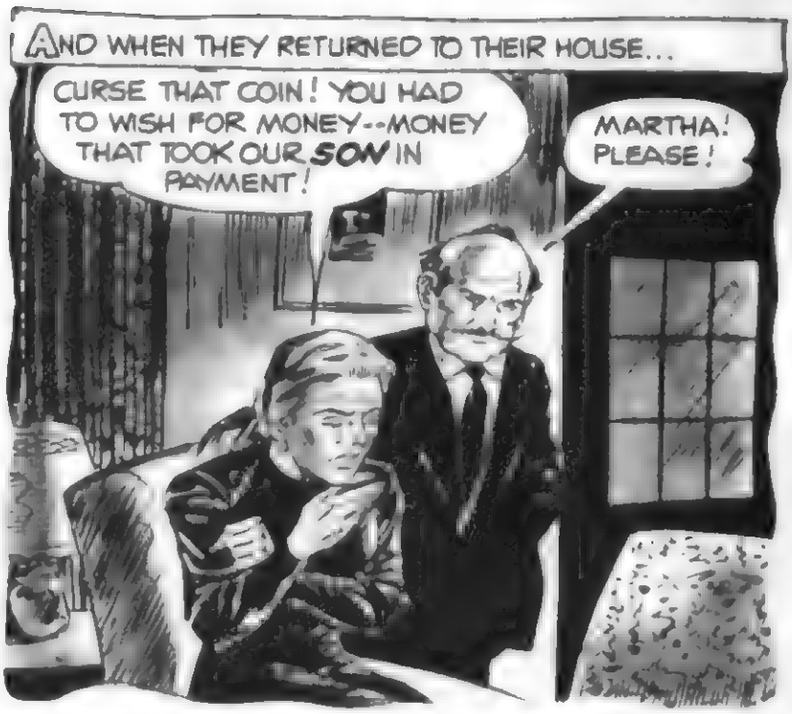
WHY---WHY I ASSUMED YOU KNEW THAT YOUR SON WAS BURNT TO DEATH IN THAT TERRIBLE FIRE LAST NIGHT!
...OHHH NO....

THAT WAS HOW THEY FIRST LEARNED OF IT!
MY BOY! SOB MY POOR BOY!
THEY WANT YOU DOWN AT THE MORGUE TO IDENTIFY HIS BODY!
I--I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE IT!

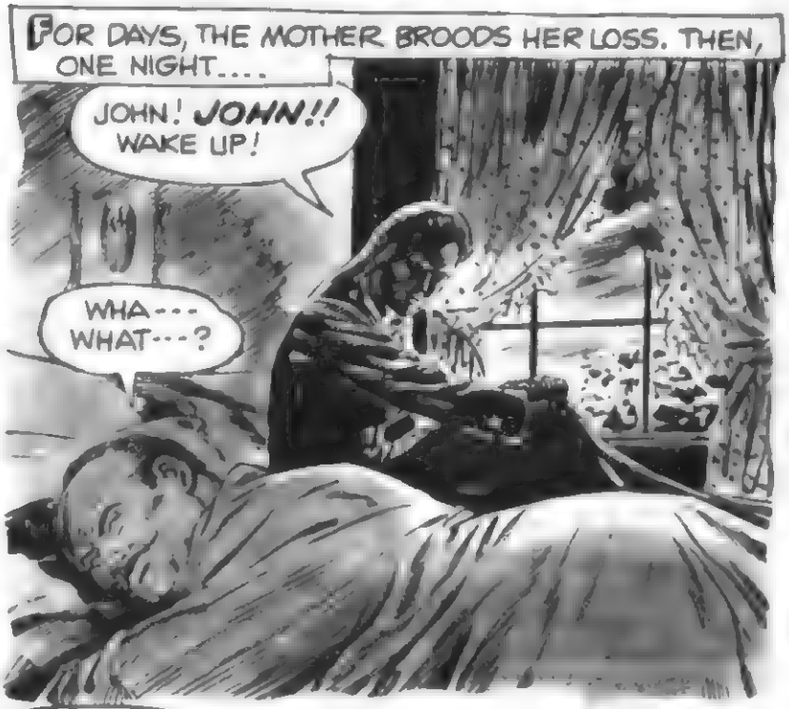
LATER AT THE MORGUE....
IT'S A FORMALITY WE MUST GO THROUGH, BUT BRACE YOURSELF. HE'S PRETTY BADLY BURNED.
I--I FEEL AS IF I'D DONE THIS BEFORE SOMEWHERE...

GRAB HIM!

THE FOLLOWING DAY....
I HAVE MY THOUSAND DOLLARS---BUT AT WHAT A COST! MY BOY'S LIFE!
OH, TOM-- MY POOR TOM!


AND WHEN THEY RETURNED TO THEIR HOUSE...
CURSE THAT COIN! YOU HAD TO WISH FOR MONEY--MONEY THAT TOOK OUR SON IN PAYMENT!
MARTHA! PLEASE!

DON'T TOUCH ME! YOU HELPED KILL OUR BOY!
NO! NO!


FOR DAYS, THE MOTHER BROODS HER LOSS. THEN, ONE NIGHT....
JOHN! JOHN!! WAKE UP!
WHA--- WHAT---?

THE COIN! THE COIN!! IT STILL HAS TWO WISHES LEFT, HASN'T IT?
Y-YES!

WISH OUR BOY BACK TO LIFE! WISH IT-- WITH THE COIN!
NO! NO! I KNOW NOW, MARTHA! MONKEY'S PAW... NOT A COIN, IS THE EVIL! MARTHA... DON'T!

IF YOU WON'T, I WILL! WHERE IS THAT COIN?
MARTHA! FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE! WAIT--! LISTEN TO ME!

HERE IT IS! I'LL HAVE MY BOY AGAIN!
IN HEAVEN'S NAME! DON'T--

I WISH MY BOY BACK TO LIFE! BRING MY BOY BACK TO LIFE, COIN!

MY PALM....THE COIN BURNED IT!

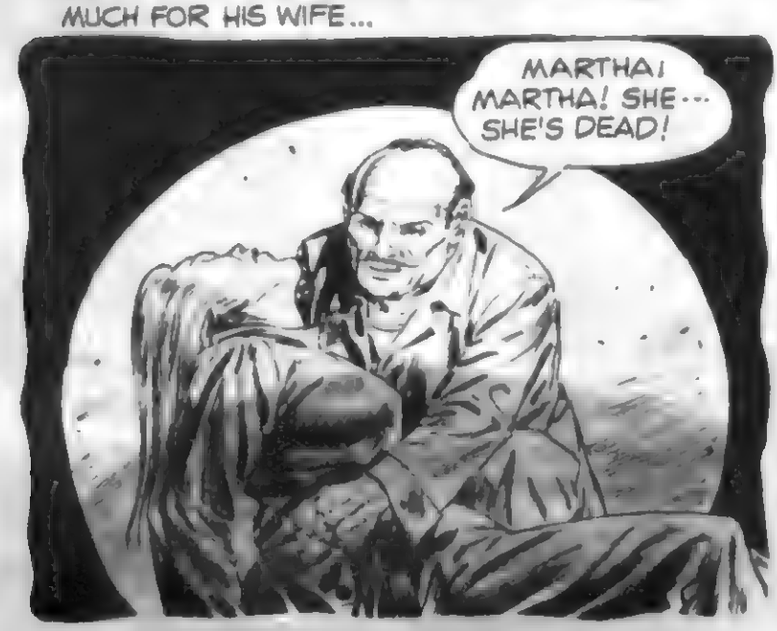
MARTHA, YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'VE DONE! I PRAY TO HEAVEN YOUR WISH WON'T BE GRANTED!
;SOB: I--I WANT MY BOY..... ;SOB:

THEN A WILD STORM BREAKS OUT---BEFORE THEY CAN DROP OFF TO SLEEP AGAIN....
W-WHAT WAS THAT? SOMEONE SCREAMING!

IT---IT'S SOMEONE SCREAMING IN PAIN! JOHN! IT SOUNDS LIKE OUR BOY!
NO! NO! DON'T LET IT BE HIM! FOR I KNOW WHAT THE ENDING WILL BE!

TOM!!
YOU BROUGHT ME HERE! LET ME IN! AIE-EE!

EVEN AS THE COIN BURNS INTO JOHN'S PALM, THE SCREAMING STOPS....BUT IT HAS BEEN TOO MUCH FOR HIS WIFE...



HE BURIES HIS WIFE NEXT TO HIS SON, AND THE ONLY OTHER MOURNER TO BE SEEN IS A STRANGE FIGURE IN AN ORIENTAL GARMENT...

The End

THE BEAST

East of Suez, some hold, the direct control of Providence ceases; Man being there handed over to the power of the Gods and Devils of Asia, and the Church of England Providence only exercising an occasional and modified supervision in the case of Englishmen.

This theory accounts for some of the more unnecessary horrors of life in India: it may be stretched to explain my story

My friend Strickland of the Police, who knows as much of natives of India as is good for any man, can bear witness to the facts of the case. Dumoise, our doctor, also saw what

Strickland and I saw. The inference which he drew from the evidence was entirely incorrect. He is dead now; he died, in a rather curious manner, which has been elsewhere described.

When Fleete came to India, he owned a little money and some land in the Himalayas, near a place called Dharmsala. Both properties had been left him by an uncle, and he came out to finance them. He was a big, heavy, genial, and inoffensive man. His knowledge of natives was, of course, limited, and he complained of the difficulties of the language.

He rode in from his place in the hills to spend New Year in the station, and he stayed with Strickland. On New Year's Eve there was a big dinner at the club, and the night was excusably wet. When men foregather from the uttermost ends of the Empire, they have a right to be riotous. The Frontier had sent down a contingent o' Catch-'em-Alive-O's who had not seen twenty white faces for a year, and were used to ride fifteen miles to dinner at the next Fort at the risk of a Khyberee bullet where their drinks should lie. They profited by their new security, for they tried to play pool with a curled-up hedgehog found in the garden, and one of them carried the marker round the room in his teeth. Half a dozen planters had come in from the south and were talking "horse" to the Biggest Liar in Asia, who trying to cap all their stories at once. Everybody was there, and there was a general closing up of ranks and taking stock of our losses in dead or disabled that had fallen during the past year.

It was a very wet night, and I remember that we sang "Auld Lang Syne" with our feet in the Polo Championship Cup, and our heads among the stars, and swore that we were all dear friends. Then some of us went away and annexed Burma, and some tried to open up the Sudan and were opened up by Fuzzies in that cruel scrub outside Suakim, and some found stars and medals, and some were married, which was bad, and some did other things which were worse, and the others of us stayed in our chains and strove to make money on insufficient experiences.

Fleete began the night with sherry and bitters, drank champagne steadily up to dessert, then raw, rasping Capri with all the strength of whisky, took Benedictine with his coffee, four or five whiskies and sodas to improve his pool strokes, beer and bones at half-past two, winding up with old brandy. Consequently, when he came out, at half-past three in the morning, into fourteen degrees of frost, he was very angry with his horse for coughing, and tried to leapfrog into the saddle. The horse broke away and went to his stables; so Strickland and I formed a Guard of Dishonor to take Fleete home.

Our road lay through the bazaar, close to a little temple of Hanuman, the Monkeygod, who is a leading divinity worthy of respect. All gods have good points, just as have all priests. Personally, I attach much importance to Hanuman, and am kind of his people—the great gray apes of the hills. One never knows when one may want a friend.

There was a light in the temple, and as we passed, we could hear voices of men chanting hymns. In a native temple, the priests rise at all hours of the night to do honor to their god. Before we could stop him, Fleete dashed up the steps, patted two priests on the back, and was gravely grinding the ashes of his cigar-butt into the forehead of the red stone image of Hanuman. Strickland tried to drag him out, but he sat down and said solemnly:

"Shee that? 'Mark of the B—beasht! I made it. Ishn't it fine?"

In half a minute the temple was alive and noisy, and Strickland, who knew what came of polluting gods, said that things might occur. He, by virtue of his official position, long residence in the country, and weakness for going among the natives, was known to the priests and he felt unhappy. Fleete sat on the ground and refused to move. He said that "good old Hanuman" made a very soft pillow.

Then, without any warning, a Silver Man came out of a recess behind the image of the god. He was perfectly naked in that bitter, bitter cold, and his body shone like frosted silver, for he was what the Bible calls "a leper as white as snow." Also he had no face, because he was a leper of some years' standing and his disease was heavy upon him. We two stooped to haul Fleete up, and the temple was filling and filling with folk who seemed to spring from the earth, when the Silver Man ran in under our arms, making a noise exactly like the mewing of an otter, caught Fleete round the body and dropped his head on Fleete's breast before we could wrench him away. Then he retired to a corner and sat mewing while the crowd blocked all the doors.

The priests were very angry until the Silver Man touched Fleete. That nuzzling seemed to sober them.

At the end of a few minutes' silence one of the priests came to Strickland and said, in perfect English, "Take your friend away. He

was done with Hanuman, but Hanuman has not done with him." The crowd gave room and we carried Fleete into the road.

Strickland was very angry. He said that we might all three have been knifed, and that Fleete should thank his stars that he had escaped without injury.

Fleete thanked no one. He said that he wanted to go to bed. He was gorgeously drunk.

We moved on, Strickland silent and wrathful until Fleete was taken with violent shivering fits and sweating. He said that the smells of the bazaar were overpowering, and he wondered why slaughter-houses were permitted so near English residences. "Can't you smell the blood?" said Fleete.

We put him to bed at last, just as the dawn was breaking, and Strickland invited me to have another whiskey and soda. While we were drinking he talked of the trouble in the temple, and admitted that it baffled him completely. Strickland hates being mystified by natives, because his business in life is to overmatch them with their own weapons. He has not yet succeeded in doing this, but in fifteen or twenty years he will have made some small progress.

"They should have mauled us," he said, "instead of mewing at us. I wonder what they meant. I don't like it one little bit."

I said that the Managing Committee of the temple would in all probability bring a criminal action against us for insulting their religion. There was a section of the Indian Penal Code which exactly met Fleet's offense. Strickland said he only hoped and prayed that they would do this. Before I left I looked into Fleete's room and saw him lying on his right side, scratching his left breast. Then I went to bed cold, depressed, and unhappy, at seven o'clock in the morning.

At one o'clock I rode over to Strickland's house to inquire after Fleete's head. I imagined that it would be a sore one. Fleete was breakfasting and seemed unwell. His temper was gone, for he was abusing the cook for not supplying him with an underdone chop. A man who can eat raw meat after a wet night is a curiosity. I told Fleete this and he laughed.

"You breed queer mosquitoes in these parts," he said. "I've been bitten to pieces, but only in one place."

"Let's have a look at the bite," said Strickland. "It may have gone down since this morning."

While the chops were being cooked, Fleete opened his shirt and showed us, just over his left breast, a mark, the perfect double of the black rosettes—the five or six irregular blotches arranged in a circle—on a leopard's hide. Strickland looked and said, "It was only pink this morning. It's grown black now."

"By Jove!" he said, "this is nasty. What is it?"

We could not answer. Here the chops came in, all red and juicy, and Fleete bolted three in a most offensive manner. He ate on his right grinders only, and threw his head way over his right shoulder as he snapped the meat. When he had finished, it struck him that he had been behaving strangely, for he said apologetically, "I don't think I ever felt so hungry in my life. I've bolted like an ostrich."

After breakfast Strickland said to me, "Don't go. Stay here, and stay for the night."

Seeing that my house was not three miles from Strickland's, this request was absurd. But Strickland insisted, and was going to say something when Fleete interrupted by declaring in a shamefaced way that he felt hungry again. Strickland sent a man to my house to fetch over my bedding and a horse, and we three went down to Strickland's stables to pass the hours until it was time to go out for a ride. The man who has a weakness for hourses never wearies of inspecting them; and when two men are killing time in this way they gather knowledge and lies the one from the other.

There were five horses in the stables, and I shall never forget the scene as we tried to look them over. They seemed to have gone mad.

They reared and screamed and nearly tore up their pickets; they sweated and shivered and lathered and were distraught with fear. Strickland's horses used to know him as well as his dogs; which made the matter more curious. We left the stable for fear of the brutes throwing themselves in their panic. Then Strickland turned back and called me. The horses were still frightened, but they let us "gentle" and make much of them, and put their heads in our bosoms.

"They aren't afraid of *us*," said Strickland. "D'you know, I'd give three months' pay if *Outrage* here could talk."

But *Outrage* was dumb, and could only cuddle up to his master and blow out his nostrils, as is the custom of horses when they wish to explain things but can't. Fleete came up when we were in the stalls, and as soon as the horses saw him, their fright broke out afresh. It was all that we could do to escape from the place unkicked. Strickland said, "They don't seem to love you, Fleete."

"Nonsense," said Fleete; "my mare will follow me like a dog." He went to her; she was in a loose-box; but as he slipped the bars she plunged, knocked him down, and broke away into the garden. I laughed, but Strickland was not amused. He took his moustache in both fists and pulled at it till it nearly came out. Fleete, instead of going off to chase his property, yawned, saying that he felt sleepy. He went to the house to lie down, which was a foolish way of spending New Year's Day.

Strickland sat with me in the stables and asked if I had noticed anything peculiar in Fleete's manner. I said that he ate his food like a beast; but that this might have been the result of living alone in the hills out of the reach of society as refined and elevating as ours for instance. Strickland was not amused. I do not think that he listened to me, for his next sentence referred to the mark on Fleete's breast, and I said that it might have been caused by blister-flies, or that it was possibly a birth-mark newly born and now visible for the first time. We both agreed that it was unpleasant to look at, and Strickland found occasion to say that I was a fool.

"I can't tell you what I think now," said he, "because you would call me a madman; but you must stay with me for the next few days, if you can. I want you to watch Fleete, but don't tell me what you think till I have made up my mind."

"But I am dining out tonight," I said.

"So am I," said Strickland, "and so is Fleete. At least if he doesn't change his mind."

We walked about the garden smoking, but saying nothing—because we were friends, and talking spoils good tobacco—till our pipes were out. Then we went to wake up Fleete. He was wide awake and fidgeting about his room.

"I say, I want some more chops," he said. "Can I get them?"

We laughed and said, "Go and change. The ponies will be round in a minute."

"All right," said Fleete. "I'll go when I get the chops—underdone ones, mind."

He seemed to be quite in earnest. It was four o'clock, and we had had breakfast at one; still, for a long time, he demaned those underdone chops. Then he changed into riding clothes and went out into the verandah. His pony—the mare had not been caught—would not let him come near. All three horses were unmanageable—mad with fear—and finally Fleete said that he would stay at home and get something to eat. Strickland and I rode out wondering. As we passed the temple of Hanuman, the Silver Man came out and mewed at us.

"He is not one of the regular priests of the temple," said Strickland. "I think I should peculiarly like to lay my hands on him."

There was no spring in our gallop on the racecourse that evening. The horses were stale, and moved as though they had been ridden out.

"The fright after breakfast has been too much for them," said Strickland.

That was the only remark he made through the remainder of the ride. Once or twice I think he swore to himself; but that did not count.

We came back in the dark at seven o'clock, and saw that there were no lights in the bungalow. "Careless ruffians my servants are!" said Stickland.

My horse reared at something on the carriage drive, and Fleete stood up under its nose.

"What are you doing, grovelling about the garden?" said Strickland.

But both horses bolted and nearly threw us. We dismounted by the stables and returned to Fleete who was on his hands and knees under the orangebushes.

"What the devil's wrong with you?" said Strickland.

"Nothing, nothing in the world," said Fleete, speaking very quickly and thickly. "I've been gardening—botanizing you know. The smell of the earth is delightful. I think I'm going for a walk—a long walk—all night."

Then I saw that there was something excessively out of order somewhere, and I said to Strickland, "I am not dining out."

"Bless you!" said Strickland. "Here, Fleete, get up. You'll catch fever there. Come in to dinner and let's have the lamps lit. We'll all dine at home."

Fleete stood up unwillingly, and said, "No lamps—no lamps. It's much nicer here. Let's dine outside and have some more chops—lots of 'em and underdone—bloody ones with gristle."

Now a December evening in Northern India is bitterly cold, and Fleete's suggestion was that of a maniac.

"Come in," said Strickland sternly. "Come in at once."

Fleete came, and when the lamps were brought, we saw that he was literally plastered with dirt from head to foot. He must have been rolling in the garden. He shrank from the light and went to his room. His eyes were horrible to look at. There was a green light behind them, not in them, if you understand, and the man's lower lip hung down.

Strickland said, "There is going to be trouble—big trouble—tonight. Don't you change your riding-things."

We waited and waited for Fleete's reappearance, and ordered dinner in the meantime. We could hear him moving about his own room, but there was no light there. Presently from the room came the long-drawn howl of a wolf.

People write and talk lightly of blood running cold and hair standing up and things of that kind. Both sensations are too horrible to be trifled with. *My* heart stopped as though a knife had been driven through it, and Strickland turned white as the tablecloth.

The howl was repeated, and was answered by another howl far across the fields.

That set the gilded roof on the horror. Strickland dashed into Fleete's room. I followed, and we saw Fleete getting out of the window. He made beast-noises in the back of his throat. He could not answer us when we shouted at him. He spat.

I don't quite remember what followed, but I think that Strickland must have stunned him with the long boot-jack or else I should never been able to sit on his chest. Fleete could not speak, he could only snarl, and his snarls were those of a wolf, not of a man. The human spirit must have been giving way all day and have died out with the twilight. We were dealing with a beast that had once been Fleete.

The affair was beyond any human and rational experience. I tried to say "Hydrophobia," but the word wouldn't come, because I knew that I was lying.

We bound this beast with leather thongs of the punkahrope, and tied its thumbs and big toes together, and gagged it with a shoe-horn, which makes a very efficient gag if you know how to arrange it. Then we carried it into the dining-room, and sent a man to Dumoise, the doctor, telling him to come over at once. After we had despatched the messenger and were drawing breath, Strickland said, "It's no good. This isn't any doctor's work." I also knew that he spoke the truth.

The beast's head was free, and it threw it about from side to side. Any one entering the room would have believed that we were curing a wolf's pelt. That was the most loathsome accessory of all.

Strickland sat with his chin in the heel of his fist, watching the beast as it wriggled on the ground, but saying nothing. The shirt had been torn open in the scuffle and showed the black rosette mark on the left breast. It stood out like a blister.

In the silence of the watching we heard something without mewing like a she-otter. We both rose to our feet, and I answer for myself, not Strickland, felt sick—actually and physically sick. We told each other, as did the men in *Pinafore*, that it was the cat.

Dumoise arrived, and I never saw a little man so unprofessionally shocked. He said that it was a heartrending case of hydrophobia, and that nothing could be done. At least any palliative measures would only prolong the agony. The beast was foaming at the mouth. Fleete, as we told Dumoise, had been bitten by dogs once or twice. Any man who keeps half a dozen terriers must expect a nip now and again. Dumoise could offer no help. He could only certify that Fleete was dying of hydrophobia. The beast was then howling, for it had managed to spit out the shoe-horn. Dumoise said that he would be ready to certify to the cause of death, and that the end was certain. He was a good little man, and he offered to remain with us; but Strickland refused the kindness. He did not wish to poison Dumoise's New Year. He would only ask him not to give the real cause of Fleete's death to the public.

So Dumoise left, deeply agitated: and as soon as the noise of the cartwheels had died away, Strickland

told me, in a whisper, his suspicions. They were so wildly improbable that he dared not say them out loud; and I, who entertained all Strickland's beliefs, was so ashamed of owning to them that I pretended to disbelieve.

"Even if the Silver Man had bewitched Fleete for polluting the image of Hanuman, the punishment could not have fallen so quickly."

As I was whispering this the cry outside the house rose again, and the beast fell into a fresh paroxysm of struggling till we were afraid that the thongs that held it would give away.

"Watch!" said Strickland. "If this happens six times I shall take the law into my own hands. I order you to help me."

He went into his room and came out in a few minutes with the barrels of an old shotgun, a piece of fishing-line, some thick cord, and his heavy wooden bedstead. I reported that the convulsions had followed the cry by two seconds in each case, and the beast seemed perceptibly weaker.

Strickland muttered, "But he can't take away the life! He can't take away the life!"

I said, though I knew that I was arguing against myself, "It may be a cat. It must be a cat. If the Silver Man is responsible, why does he dare to come here?"

Strickland arranged the wood on the hearth, put the gun-barrels into the glow of the fire, spread the twine on the table and broke a walking stick in two. There was one yard of fishing line, gut, lapped with wire, such as is used for *mah-seer*-fishing, and he tied the two ends together in a loop.

Then he said, "How can we catch him? He must be taken alive and unhurt."

I said that we must trust in Providence, and go out softly with polo-sticks into the shrubbery at the front of the house. The man or animal that made the cry was evidently moving round the house as regularly as a night watchman. We could wait in the bushes till he came by and knock him over.

Strickland accepted this suggestion, and we slipped out from a bathroom window into the front verandah and then across the carriage drive into the bushes.

In the moonlight we could see the leper coming round the corner of the house. He was perfectly naked, and from time to time he mewed and stopped to dance with his shadow. It was an unattractive sight, and thinking of poor Fleete, brought to such degradation by so foul a creature, I put away all my doubts and resolved to help Strickland from the heated gun-barrels to the loop of twine—from the loins to the head and back again—with all tortures that might be needful.

The leper halted in the front porch for a moment and we jumped out on him with the sticks. He was wonderfully strong, and we were afraid that he might escape or be fatally injured before we caught him. We had an idea that lepers were frail creatures, but this proved to be incorrect. Strickland knocked his legs from under him and I put my foot on his neck. He mewed hideously, and even through my riding-boots I could feel that his flesh was not the flesh of a clean man.

He struck at us with his hand and feet-stumps. We looped the lash of a dog-whip round him, under the armpits, and dragged him backwards into the hall and so into the dining-room where the beast lay. There we tied him with trunk-straps. He made no attempt to escape, but mewed.

When we confronted him with the beast the scene was beyond description. The beast doubled backwards into a bow as though he had been poisoned with strychnine, and moaned in the most pitiable fashion. Several other things happened also, but they cannot be put down here.

"I think I was right," said Strickland. "Now we will ask him to cure this case."

But the leper only mewed. Strickland wrapped a towel round his hand and took the gun-barrel out of the fire. I put the half of the broken walking stick through the loop of fishing-line and buckled the leper comfortably to Strickland's bedstead. I understood then how men and women and little children can endure to see a witch burnt alive; for the beast was moaning on the floor, and though the Silver Man had no face, you could see horrible feelings passing through the slab that took its place, exactly as waves of heat play across red-hot iron—gun-barrels for instance.

Strickland shaded his eyes with his hands for a moment and we got to work. This part is not to be printed.

The dawn was beginning to break when the leper spoke. His mewings had not been satisfactory up to that point. The beast had fainted from exhaustion and the house was very still. We unstrapped the leper and told him to take away the evil spirit. He crawled to the beast and laid his hand upon the left breast. That was all. Then he fell face down and whined, drawing in his breath as he did so.

We watched the face of the beast, and saw the soul of Fleete coming back into the eyes. Then a sweat broke out on the forehead and the eyes—they were human eyes—closed. We waited for an hour but Fleete still slept. We carried him to his room and bade the leper go, giving him the bedstead, and the sheet on the bedstead to cover his nakedness, the gloves and the towels with which we had touched him, and the whip that had been hooked round his body. He put the sheet about him and went out into the early morning without speaking or mewing.

Strickland wiped his face and sat down. A night-gong, far away in the city, made seven o'clock.

"Exactly four-and-twenty hours!" said Strickland. "And I've done enough to ensure my dismissal from the service, besides permanent quarters in a lunatic asylum. Do you believe that we are awake?"

The red-hot gun-barrel had fallen on the floor and was singeing the carpet. The smell was entirely real.

That morning at eleven we two together went to wake up Fleete. We looked and saw that the black leopard-rosette on his chest had disappeared. He was very drowsy and tired, but as soon as he saw us, he said "Oh! Confound you fellows. Happy New Year to you. Never mix your liquors. I'm nearly dead."

"Thanks for your kindness, but you're over time," said Strickland. "Today is the morning of the second. You've slept the clock round with a vengeance."

The door opened, and little Dumoise put his head in. He had come on foot, and fancied that we were laying out Fleete.

"I've brought a nurse," said Dumoise. "I suppose that she can come in for . . . what is necessary."

"By all means," said Fleete cheerily, sitting up in bed. "Bring on your nurses."

Dumoise was dumb. Strickland led him out and explained that there must have been a mistake in the diagnosis. Dumoise remained dumb and left the house hastily. He considered that his professional reputation had been injured, and was inclined to make a personal matter of the recovery. Strickland went out too. When he came back, he said that he had been to call on the Temple of Hanuman to offer redress for the pollution of the god, and had been solemnly assured that no white man had ever touched the idol and that he was an incarnation of all the virtues laboring under a delusion. "What do you think?" said Strickland.

I said " 'There are more things . . . '"

But Strickland hates that quotation. He says that I have worn it threadbare.

One other curious thing happened which frightened me as much as anything in all the night's work. When Fleete was dressed he came into the dining-room and sniffed. He had a quaint trick of moving his nose when he sniffed. "Horrid doggy smell, here," said he. "You should really keep those terriers of yours in better order. Try sulphur, Strick."

But Strickland did not answer. He caught hold of the back of a chair, and without warning, went into an amazing fit of hysterics. It is terrible to see a strong man overtaken with hysteria. Then it struck me that we had fought for Fleete's soul with the Silver Man in the room, and had disgraced ourselves as Englishmen for ever, and I laughed and gasped and gurgled just as shamefully as Strickland, while Fleete thought that we had both gone mad. We never told him what we had done.

Some years later, when Strickland had married and was a church-going member of society for his wife's sake, we reviewed the incident dispassionately, and Strickland suggested that I should put it before the public.

I cannot myself see that this step is likely to clear up the mystery; because, in the first place, no one will believe a rather unpleasant story, and, in the second, it is well known to every rightminded man that the gods of the heathen are stone and brass, and any attempt to deal with them otherwise is justly condemned. ●

WELCOME, GHOULS! WE BEGIN OUR LOATHSOME JOURNEY INTO FEAR WITH A TERRIFYING NARRATIVE THAT WILL KEEP YOU YOWLING WITH JOY! THIS MORBID MORSEL WILL TANTALIZE YOUR IMAGINATION AND SHOCK YOUR SENSES AS IT BUILDS TO A CLIMAX BOUND TO LEAVE YOU GASPING FOR BREATH!! HOLD TIGHT, KIDDIES AS WE LEAVE OFF WITH...

VAMPIRE-GHOULS

HER HEART SWELLS WITH PRIDE AS SHE STANDS ON THE PORCH AND WATCHES THEM WALK AWAY! THEY'RE BOTH SUCH MANLY SPECIMENS!
YOU CAN'T KEEP THIS UP MUCH LONGER, HONEY! ONE OF THESE DAYS YOU'VE GOT TO CHOOSE BETWEEN US!
YEAH, LET'S HURRY UP AND GET RID OF HIM, ELAINE!
BOTH MINE!
BUT THE RIVALRY BETWEEN THE WOLFE BROTHERS IS A FRIENDLY ONE...
SHE SURE IS A LUSCIOUS GIRL, EH, FRANK?
YEP... LUSCIOUS IS JUST THE WORD, TAD!
WHEN SHE GETS HOME, ELAINE PREPARES FOR BED, THEN STROLLS INTO THE KITCHEN FOR A SNACK... IT'S MIDNIGHT AND SHE'S HUNGRY!
I'M STARVING! GUESS I MIGHT AS WELL FINISH UP LAST WEEK'S MENU!
ELAINE'S EATING HABITS LEAVE A LITTLE SOMETHING TO BE DESIRED, EH, KIDDIES? LOOK AT THE WAY SHE LEANS OVER THE FREEZER AND JUST DIGS IN! BUT WHAT'S THAT STICKING OUT...AN ARM?
HMM, THIS IS REALLY GONNA HIT THE SPOT!
LET'S FACE IT, FRIENDS, THERE'S NO DENYING IT! ELAINE IS A VAMPIRE, AND HER MIDNIGHT SNACK IS THE BLOOD OF HER LAST VICTIM...
TOO BAD... THIS IS THE END OF IT! NOT ANOTHER DROP LEFT!
THE LOVING BROTHERS KNOW NOTHING OF ELAINE'S TRUE NATURE... FANG-LIPPED... LUSTING FOR HUMAN BLOOD...
And WHAT DOES SHE MEAN BY "HUNTING", YOU ASK? WELL, ELAINE'S DIET CONSISTS ONLY OF HUMAN BLOOD AND MUST KILL EVERY WEEK OR TEN DAYS FOR A FRESH SUPPLY!
YAWN! IT'S TOO LATE TO GO HUNTING TONIGHT, BUT TOMORROW I'LL HAVE TO GET BUSY... THE FREEZER'S EMPTY!
SCHWEET (HIC!) ADELINE... SCHWEET (HIC!) ADELINE!

EXCUSE ME, HANDSOME, BUT I WONDER IF YOU'D MIND WALKING ME HOME? THESE DARK STREETS FRIGHTEN ME!

I'D (HIC) CONSIDER IT AN HONOR TO WALK YOU HOME, BABY!

SCHAY! THIS IS A SCHWELL PLACE YOU GOT HERE! REAL (HIC) NICE!
GLAD YOU LIKE IT, SUCKER.. YOU'RE GOING TO BE STAYING HERE FOREVER!

WHATCHA TALKIN' ABOUT, HONEY? I CAN'T... YAAHHH! YOUR FACE... YOU...
THAT'S RIGHT, BRIGHT-EYES I'M A VAMPIRE! TOO BAD, ISN'T IT? TOO BAD FOR YOU!

ELAINE IS AN EXPERT... ONE QUICK MOVEMENT AND SHE WAS UPON HIM...
YIEEEEEEEE

THAT NIGHT, AS SHE ALWAYS DOES ON THE NIGHT OF A KILL, ELAINE HAD A LITTLE PARTY! BEFORE FREEZING THE BODY, SHE TREATED HERSELF TO A PINT OF WARM BLOOD...
MMMM! TASTY!

And THEN THE BODY WAS PUT IN THE FREEZER...
THERE YOU GO, BIG BOY! YOU SHOULD LAST AT LEAST TEN OR TWELVE DAYS!

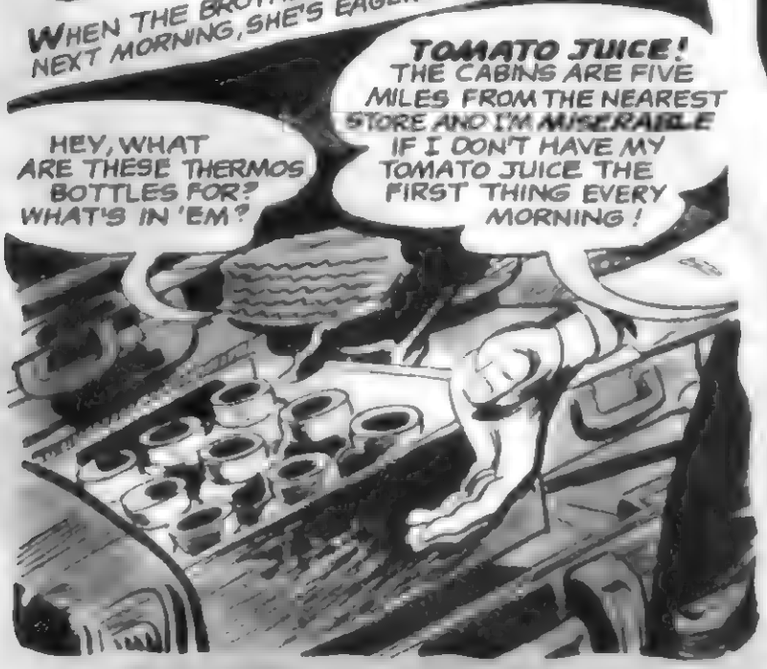
THE NEXT DAY NOW, AND AS USUAL, ELAINE HAS A DATE WITH TAD AND FRANK WOLFE...
HEY, HONEY, WE'VE GOT SOMETHING IMPORTANT TO ASK YOU!
START ASKING, FELLAS!

WELL, YOU KNOW WE BOTH LOVE YOU...BUT SO FAR YOU HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO CHOOSE BETWEEN US!
SO WE THOUGHT IF THE THREE OF US SPENT OUR VACATIONS TOGETHER AND YOU REALLY GOT TO KNOW US, MAYBE YOU'D DECIDE WHICH ONE TO MARRY!

ELAINE IS ELATED...
IT SOUNDS MARVELOUS... AND I KNOW JUST THE PLACE! AN ISOLATED LAKE IN THE MOUNTAINS! WE CAN RENT CABINS...GO SWIMMING...FISHING AND HAVE A SWELL TIME!

THREE WEEKS LATER, ELAINE PACKS...
I KNEW I COULD GET BOTH OF THEM! AND NOW I WILL!

YES, ELAINE IS GREEDY! ELAINE COULDN'T BEAR THE THOUGHT OF SETTLING FOR ONE WHEN SHE MIGHT BE ABLE TO TRAP BOTH!
And TO INSURE AN AMPLE SUPPLY OF FOOD UNTIL TAD AND FRANK BECOME HER FEAST, ELAINE GOES HUNTING ON THE NIGHT BEFORE THE VACATION IS TO BEGIN...
IT'LL BE SO EASY TO ARRANGE IT AT THE LAKE! SO EASY!


WHEN THE BROTHERS ARRIVE EARLY THE NEXT MORNING, SHE'S EAGERLY AWAITING THEM...
HEY, WHAT ARE THESE THERMOS BOTTLES FOR? WHAT'S IN 'EM?
TOMATO JUICE! THE CABINS ARE FIVE MILES FROM THE NEAREST STORE AND I'M MISERABLE IF I DON'T HAVE MY TOMATO JUICE THE FIRST THING EVERY MORNING!

I'LL HAVE TO REMEMBER THAT AFTER WE'RE MARRIED, DARLING!
YOU'RE JUST DREAMING, TAD! I'M THE GUY SHE'S GOING TO CHOOSE!
WE'LL SEE, BOYS...WE'LL SOON SEE!

THEY REACHED THEIR DESTINATION, AND AS ELAINE HAD PROMISED, THE CABINS ARE ISOLATED FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD!
ISN'T IT BEAUTIFUL! SO QUIET...PEACEFUL! WE'RE ALL ALONE!
ALL ALONE!
JUST THE THREE OF US!
THE TWO MEN GO TO THER CABIN AND ELAINE GOES TO HERS...THE FIRST THING SHE DOES IS OPEN ONE OF THE THERMOS BOTTLES! IT'S DINNER TIME!
UGH! I HATE IT IN BOTTLES! THERE'S NOTHING LIKE THE REAL THING!
GULP
AND IN THEIR CABIN, THE TWO WOLFE BROTHERS MAKE A VOW...
AND MAY THE BEST MAN WIN, FRANK!
RIGHT, TAD... AND REMBER OUR PLEDGE! NO HARD FEELINGS... WHOEVER WINS HAS HER ALL TO HIMSELF WITH NO INTERFERENCE FROM THE LOSER!
FOR THE FIRST TWO DAYS, ELAINE IS CONTENT MERELY TO ENJOY THE VACATION... BUT AS THE THIRD EVENING APPROACHES, SHE GETS HER PLAN INTO ACTION...
YOU KNOW, BOYS, THERE'S JUST ONE PROBLEM! I'VE NEVER SEEN EITHER OF YOU ALONE! HOW CAN I TELL WHICH ONE I LOVE UNLESS I KNOW EACH OF YOU INDIVIDUALLY!
SAY, THAT'S RIGHT! WHAT'LL WE DO, HONEY?
DON'T WORRY, DARLINGS, WE CAN SETTLE IT EASILY! TAD, WHY DON'T YOU STROLL OVER TO MY CABIN BY YOURSELF AFTER DINNER, AND FRANK, I'LL SEE YOU TOMORROW NIGHT!
IT'S A DATE, BABY!
TAD ARRIVES AT EIGHT O'CLOCK AND AS ELAINE LURES HIM INVITINGLY TOWARD THE COUCH, HIS VOICE GROWS HUSKY WITH EMOTION...
YOU KNOW YOU LOVE ME, ELAINE! IT'S GOT TO BE ME! YOU'RE MINE!
YES, TAD... AND YOU'RE MINE!
THE ROOM IS DARK AND AS TAD BURIES HIS HEAD IN ELAINE'S SHOULDER, CARESSING HER NECK, HE CAN'T SEE HER FACE... OR THE KNIFE WHICH GLEAMS IN HER HAND...
DARLING... DARLING...
JUST ONE MORE SECOND... ONE MORE SECOND...

BUT THE ONE SECOND IS TOO LONG! THE CABIN DOOR BURSTS OPEN AND FRANK STANDS THERE!
TAD, COME OUT HERE! I WANT TO TALK TO YOU! GET UP OFF THAT COUCH!
OKAY! OKAY! STOP YELLING ...I'M COMING!
I TELL YOU, I CAN'T STAND IT KNOWING YOU'RE INSIDE THERE KISSING HER! WE'LL HAVE TO THINK OF SOMETHING ELSE! THIS WON'T WORK!
WAIT, FRANK! WE MADE A BARGAIN AND YOU'RE GOING TO STICK TO IT!
THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK! SHE'S ALL MINE!
NO! SHE'S MINE! YOU CAN'T HAVE HER!
THE LONG MONTHS OF RESENTMENT AND JEALOUSY BURST FORTH WITH UNABATED FURY, AND THE BROTHERS TEAR INTO ONE ANOTHER WITH SEARING HATRED...
...AT TIMES FRANK APPEARED TO BE THE WINNER...
F-FRANK! MY THROAT! Y-YOU'RE STRANGLING ME!
GURR
BUT THEN, ONLY SECONDS LATER, THE TIDE IS REVERSED AND TAD HOLDS THE UPPER HAND...
TCH, TCH, TCH... I DO HOPE THEY DON'T LOSE TOO MUCH BLOOD!
OOF!
HA HA HA
FINALLY, ELAINE GIVES UP IN DISGUST AND RETURNS INSIDE THE CABIN TO AWAIT THE VICTOR...
IDIOTS! FOOLS! WHY DO THEY WASTE TIME LIKE THIS...I HUNGER FOR A GOOD HOT MEAL!

Und THEN, AT LAST, THERE IS SILENCE OUTSIDE! THE FIGHT IS OVER... THE DOOR OPENS...
B-BUT YOU'RE BOTH HERE!
YEAH... NEITHER OF US COULD WIN!
BUT WE'VE COME TO A DECISION!
WE'RE GOING TO SHARE YOU! IT'S THE ONLY WAY... IT'S SOMETHING NEW IN THE WOLFE FAMILY HISTORY... BUT THERE'S NO OTHER WAY!
SO YOU'LL SHARE ME, WILL YOU? HAHAHA! THAT'S FUNNY... VERY FUNNY!
NOT FUNNY! THAT WAY WE'LL EACH GET A PART OF YOU!
DON'T BE AFRAID, HONEY... IT WON'T HURT MUCH!
WE PLANNED THE WHOLE THING, VACATION AND EVERYTHING! BUT THEN WE COULDN'T DECIDE WHO SHOULD HAVE YOU, NOW THE PROBLEM'S SOLVED!
G-GET AWAY FROM ME! DON'T COME NEAR ME...
BUT, HONEY... WE HAVE TO COME NEAR YOU...
TO EAT YOU!
SURE, THAT'S THE WAY IT IS WITH US WOLVES... US WEREWOLVES!
YAHHHHHHHHHH
THE END

I AM FIFTY... I AM AN OLD MAN... I'M SENILE, TOTTERING, PALSIED! YOU ASK HOW THAT IS LIKELY AT MY AGE? THEN LISTEN TO THE STORY OF...

Satan's DEMON

IT HAD BEEN A MILD, PLEASANT WINTER UNTIL THE NIGHT OF THE 30TH OF DECEMBER! THEN, ALL THE HOARDED FURY OF NATURE WAS UNLEASHED AT ONCE... SHAKING THE QUIET, PEACEFUL VILLAGE OF INTERVALE TO ITS ROOTS! AND THE WILDEST TORMENT SEEMED TO BE LEVELLED UPON THE ANCIENT CEMETERY THAT HAD RESTED FOR THREE HUNDRED YEARS ON THE HILL SLOPE NOT FAR FROM OUR FAMILY HOUSE...

THERE WERE BLACK SOUNDS IN THE NIGHT, AND STRANGE SHAPES SEEMED TO FORM THAT WERE BLACKER THAN THE DARKNESS...

IT IS AN OLD NEW ENGLAND SUPERSTITION THAT ON SUCH A NIGHT, THE DEVIL'S WORK IS BEST PERFORMED...

BUT THIS IS THE TWENTIETH CENTURY AND SUPERSTITION AND BELIEF IN SPECTURAL MAGIC HAVE LONG SINCE BEEN EXPLAINED AWAY BY GREAT MEN IN THE FIELD OF PSYCHOLOGY!
THE KNOCK AT THE DOOR WAS JUST ABOUT AUDIBLE ABOVE THE STORM! GENEVIEVE WHO WAS JUST ABOUT TWENTY WITH SHARPER HEARING THAN MINE, INSISTED SOMEONE WAS AT THE DOOR...
MY DEAR MAN! COME IN!
BUT...BUT WHAT! I DON'T MEAN TO BE RUDE, BUT THOSE CLOTHES!
RIDICULOUS, AREN'T THEY? YOU SEE, A TREE WAS DOWN NEAR THE CEMETARY! AS I STOPPED, FOUR MEN SPRANG AT ME, TOOK MY MONEY, MY CAR... MY CLOTHES!
IT WAS UNUSUAL, BUT I BELIEVED THE MAN, AND SINCE HE WAS ABOUT MY SIZE, I PLACED MY WARDROBE AT HIS DISPOSAL!
I TRUST... A BIT MORE PRESENTABLE, MY FRIENDS!
OH... H-HOW DO YOU DO!
THE STRANGER SAID THAT HIS NAME WAS ARTHUR WARREN! HE HAD BEEN ALL OVER THE WORLD, SO THAT TIME PASSED WITHOUT OUR REALIZING...
I'M AFRAID I HAVE BORED YOU!
ON THE CONTRARY! YOU MUST BE OUR GUEST... IF YOUR TIME PERMITS!
OH, NO!
YOU SEE, SOME FRIENDS OF MY DAUGHTER'S WILL BE IN FOR A QUIET NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY! BUT THEN YOU'LL PROBABLY WANT TO SEE THE POLICE ABOUT THE ROBBERY!
THAT CAN WAIT! I AM HONORED BY YOUR INVITATION!
WE ROSE AND GENEVIEVE DREW THE DRAPES ASIDE! "I LOVE THE SUN HERE EARLY IN THE MORNING," SHE SAID, THEN, "OH, IT HAS CLEARED! THE MOON IS UP!"...
YES... A WANING MOON... A DYING MOON!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

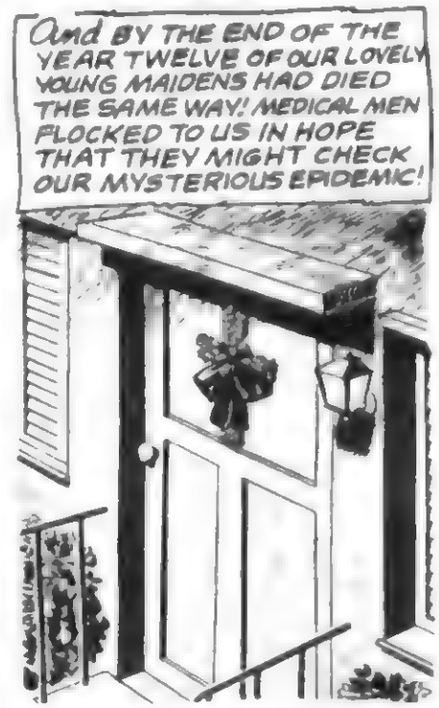
ARHUR WARREN'S WORDS IN THEMSELVES WERE NOT SO STARTLING, AS THE MANNER IN WHICH HE HAD SEEMED TO HISS THEM! BUT THE MOOD PASSED IN AN INSTANT AND WAS FORGOTTEN! THE NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY WAS A COMPLETE SUCCESS...
OUR GUEST WAS CHARMING...
I SAW IN MY DAUGHTER'S FACE A HAPPY LIGHT...
AND I NOTICED THE ENVIOUS GLANCES CAST IN WARREN'S DIRECTION BY THE OTHER GIRLS OF THE PARTY...
AS I PASSED GENEVIEVE'S ROOM THAT NIGHT SOME TIME LATER, I SAW THAT HER DOOR WAS OPEN, AND WHEN I BADE HER GOOD NIGHT, SHE DID NOT ANSWER... AND I THOUGHT...
GENEVIEVE IS IN LOVE WITH THAT YOUNG MAN...
I DID NOT SLEEP WELL, AS I SENSED SOMETHING SINISTER IN MY HOME THAT NIGHT...
THE NEXT MORNING, NEW YEAR'S DAY, OUR HOUSEKEEPER TOOK GENEVIEVE'S BREAKFAST TO HER ROOM! SHE RETURNED VERY MUCH WORRIED! I WENT TO MY DAUGHTER...
ALL NIGHT I DREAMED SUCH HORRIBLE DREAMS, AND NOW... I AM SO TIRED...
I'LL PHONE FOR DR. GREY!
LATER THAT DAY...
WHAT IS IT, DOCTOR? WHAT IS WRONG WITH MY DAUGHTER?
I WISH I COULD TELL YOU! NOTHING THAT FITS COMPLETELY INTO ANY DIAGNOSIS! ONE THING I DO KNOW... SHE MUST HAVE A BLOOD TRANSFUSION AT ONCE!
FOR A FORTNIGHT, GENEVIEVE HOVERED BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH, AND ON THE NIGHT OF JANUARY 14TH, SHE PASSED AWAY...
MY BABY! DEAD! HER MOTHER DIED WHEN SHE WAS A CHILD! I HAVE LIVED FOR HER ALONE ALL THESE YEARS! NOW... I HAVE NOTHING TO LIVE FOR! NOTHING...
COURAGE, MY FRIEND... HAVE COURAGE!

THROUGHOUT MY DAUGHTER'S LAST ILLNESS, ARTHUR WARREN HAD BEEN A TOWER OF STRENGTH, BUT NOW THE FUNERAL WAS OVER AND...
I HAVE BROUGHT YOU ILL-FORTUNE, MY FRIEND! IT IS BEST I LEAVE!
PLEASE DO NOT THINK SO! YOU HAVE GIVEN ME COURAGE, AND I LEANED ON YOU! YOU HAVE BEEN MUCH COMFORT!

TIME WILL HEAL YOUR WOUNDS, MR. KIRKLAND, BUT WITH ME AROUND THEY WILL NOT HEAL SO FAST! MY PRESENCE WILL ONLY BRING YOU HARSH MEMORIES!

HE WAS STILL POPULAR WITH THE LADIES ABOUT TOWN...
WARREN LEFT MY HOME, BUT NOT INTERVALE! OCCASIONALLY I MET HIM ON THE STREET AND NOW AND THEN WORD OF HIM WOULD REACH ME...

THEN IN THE MIDDLE OF THE FOLLOWING MONTH, YOUNG DIANA WELLS DIED OF THE SAME MALADY THAT HAD TAKEN MY GENEVIEVE...


And BY THE END OF THE YEAR TWELVE OF OUR LOVELY YOUNG MAIDENS HAD DIED THE SAME WAY! MEDICAL MEN FLOCKED TO US IN HOPE THAT THEY MIGHT CHECK OUR MYSTERIOUS EPIDEMIC!

DURING THE YEAR MY OWN HEALTH FAILED! THE FOLLOWING YEAR, WHILE I WAS AT HOME, INVALIDED, A KNOCK CAME AT THE DOOR...
I DO NOT RECEIVE VISITORS, SIR...
THIS IS IMPORTANT, MR. KIRKLAND! YOU MAY HELP ME TO CHECK THIS EPIDEMIC!

MY VISITOR, DR. PENROSE HALL BEGAN QUESTIONING ME...
BEFORE YOUR DAUGHTER'S DEATH, MR. KIRKLAND, DO YOU RECALL THE MEETING OF A STRANGER? UNDER... ER... PECULIAR CIRCUMSTANCES?
INDEED I DO! A YOUNG MAN... IN RIDICULOUS CLOTHING! I STILL HAVE HIS CLOTHES!

I LED THE WAY UPSTAIRS TO WARREN'S ROOM! THERE I OPENED THE CLOTHES CLOSET...
I DON'T UNDERSTAND, DOCTOR! THE SUIT IS GONE! ONLY THIS PILE OF DUST... AND THESE ANTIQUE BONE BUTTONS!
EXACTLY, MR. KIRKLAND! WE MUST GO AT ONCE TO THE HOME OF THE LATEST VICTIM OF THIS... THIS MALADY!

I WENT WITH DR. HALL DIRECTLY TO THE HOME OF DONALD CRANE, ABOUT FIVE MILES AWAY! HIS DAUGHTER, ALICE, HAD BEEN ILL FOR TWO DAYS...
I DON'T UNDERSTAND, DR. HALL... YOU MEAN...
YOUR DAUGHTER IS IN GREAT DANGER, MR. CRANE! NOW, HERE IS WHAT WE MUST DO...

WE WERE LED AT ONCE TO ALICE'S BEDROOM! MY HEART WAS STABBED WITH PAIN SEEING THE POOR CHILD... THEN DR. HALL WAS SPEAKING...
IN THIS CLOSET, GENTLEMEN! REMEMBER... HOLD YOUR CRUCIFIXES... DO EXACTLY AS I HAVE INSTRUCTED WHEN I SIGNAL...

THE LIGHTS WERE EXTINGUISHED... JUST AFTER MIDNIGHT SOMETHING VILE AND UNHOLY SEEMED TO PERMEATE THE ATMOSPHERE...

THROUGH THE CRACK IN THE DOOR WE SAW SOMETHING TAKE SHAPE...
NOW! HURRY!!

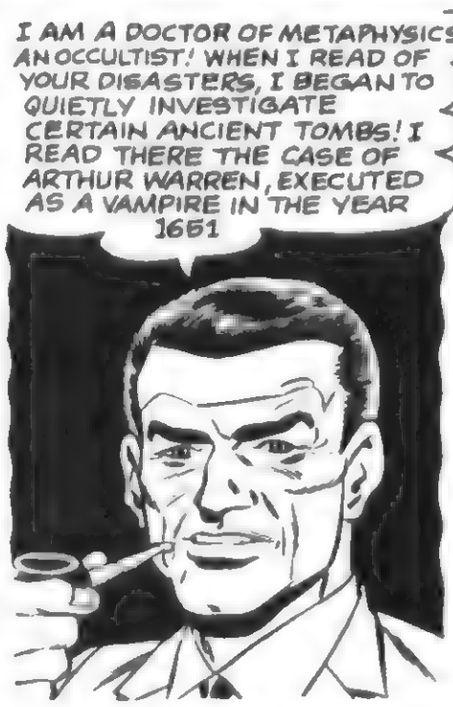
WE ADVANCED, EACH ONE OF US HOLDING HIS CRUCIFIX HIGH! THE THING TURNED WITH THE MOST UNHOLY EXPRESSION I EVER SAW!

BUT SO EVIL WAS IT THAT THE SIGHT OF THE HOLY CRUCIFIXES MADE IT HELPLESS! DR. HALL DROVE THE STAKE THROUGH ITS HEART!

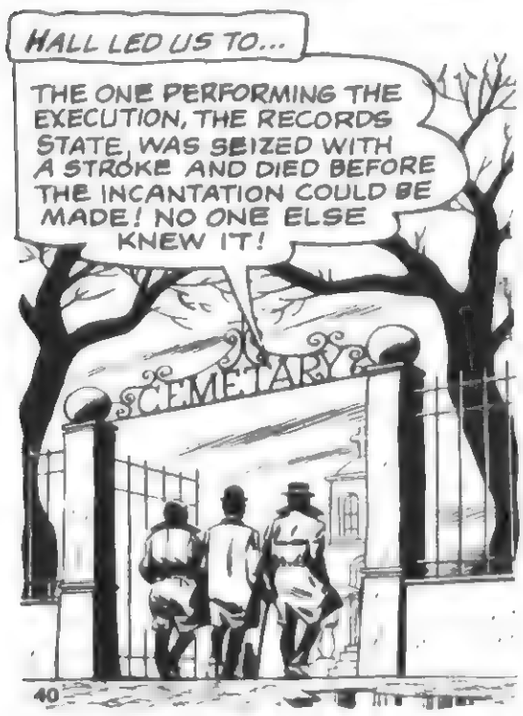
EVIL...EVIL...THING OF NIGHT AND DEVIL! DIE...DIE...CLEANSE THYSELF IN DEATH!

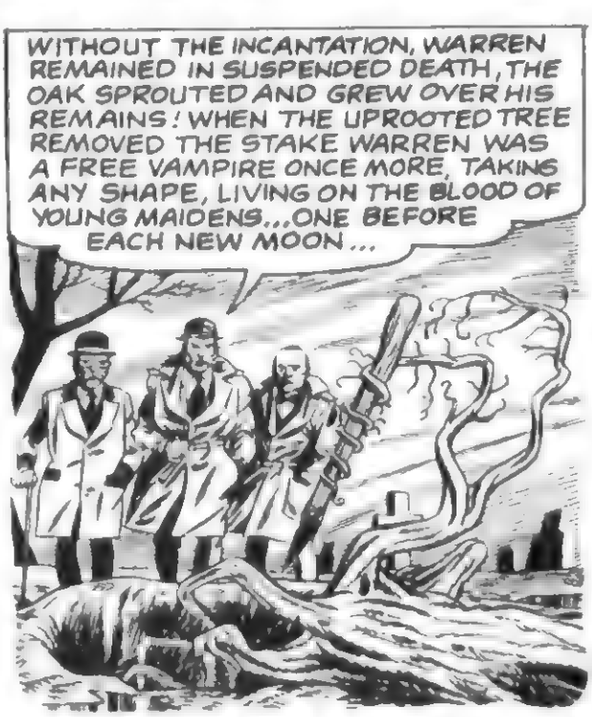
THE THING BEGAN TO MELT AND TURN INTO A SLIMY, ODORFUL MASS ON THE CARPET...

YOU WILL NOT FIND YOUR MR. WARREN AROUND ANYMORE!
MR. WARREN?


I AM A DOCTOR OF METAPHYSICS, AN OCCULTIST! WHEN I READ OF YOUR DISASTERS, I BEGAN TO QUIETLY INVESTIGATE CERTAIN ANCIENT TOMBS! I READ THERE THE CASE OF ARTHUR WARREN, EXECUTED AS A VAMPIRE IN THE YEAR 1651

FOR THE REST OF THE EXPLANATION, COME...


HALL LED US TO...
THE ONE PERFORMING THE EXECUTION, THE RECORDS STATE, WAS SEIZED WITH A STROKE AND DIED BEFORE THE INCANTATION COULD BE MADE! NO ONE ELSE KNEW IT!
CEMETARY

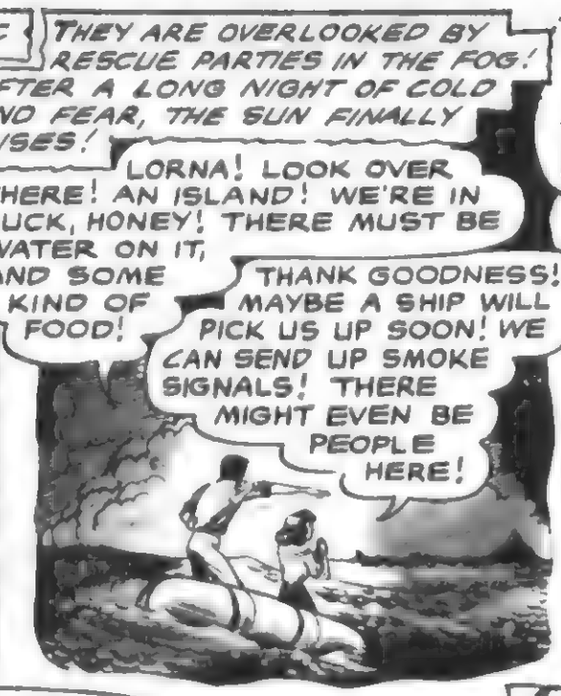

WITHOUT THE INCANTATION, WARREN REMAINED IN SUSPENDED DEATH, THE OAK SPROUTED AND GREW OVER HIS REMAINS! WHEN THE UPROOTED TREE REMOVED THE STAKE WARREN WAS A FREE VAMPIRE ONCE MORE, TAKING ANY SHAPE, LIVING ON THE BLOOD OF YOUNG MAIDENS...ONE BEFORE EACH NEW MOON...

And SO I LIVE, KNOWING I RECEIVED IT INTO MY HOME AND ON MY HANDS IS THE BLOOD OF THIRTEEN MAIDENS...FOR UNWITTINGLY I OPENED THE DOOR TO THE BLACK HEART!! MY LIFE IS SPENT! I WAIT IMPATIENTLY FOR THE GRAVE!
The End

BLACK DEATH

LOVE, THEY SAY IS LIKE DYING A LITTLE! SO IF TWO LOVERS MUST DIE, WHAT BETTER WAY THAN TO DIE TOGETHER, HAND IN HAND? NOT IN THEIR WILDEST DREAMS COULD THE TWO PEOPLE OF OUR STORY HAVE FORESEEN THE HORRORS THAT LAY IN WAIT FOR THEM IN A LONELY PLACE! THEY SHARED A NIGHTMARE IN WHICH CREATURES FROM HADES, COVERED WITH THE SLIME OF AGES, CRAWLED OVER THEIR SHRINKING BODIES AND, BIT BY BIT, TORE AWAY THE FLESH UNTIL THE BLUE BONES WERE PITILESSLY EXPOSED! IF YOU WANT TO SLEEP WELL TONIGHT— **DON'T** READ THIS SPINE FREEZING TALE ABOUT **NEW BONES FOR OLD...**

SECONDS OF FRENZY AND PANIC ELAPSE, AND THEN...
KEEP SWIMMING, LORNA! I'VE GOT A RAFT! I'LL HAVE YOU IN A MINUTE!
OH! H-HURRY! W-WATER IS SO COLD! I-I CAN'T STAY UP MUCH L-LONGER!


THEY ARE OVERLOOKED BY RESCUE PARTIES IN THE FOG! AFTER A LONG NIGHT OF COLD AND FEAR, THE SUN FINALLY RISES!
LORNA! LOOK OVER THERE! AN ISLAND! WE'RE IN LUCK, HONEY! THERE MUST BE WATER ON IT, AND SOME KIND OF FOOD!
THANK GOODNESS! MAYBE A SHIP WILL PICK US UP SOON! WE CAN SEND UP SMOKE SIGNALS! THERE MIGHT EVEN BE PEOPLE HERE!

CAREFUL OF THE SURF NOW! DON'T WANT TO BASH OUR HEADS IN ON A ROCK! HMMM—SURE LOOKS DESERTED, DOESN'T IT?
Y-YES! I GUESS I WAS WRONG ABOUT FINDING PEOPLE HERE! BUT AT LEAST IT'S DRY LAND!

LOOK AT THAT! FUNNY LOOKING KIND OF SAND DUNES! ALL IN THE SAME SPOT, SORT OF LIKE A VILLAGE!
ARE YOU SURE THEY'RE DUNES, PAT? THEY LOOK SO—SO REGULAR! ALMOST AS THOUGH THEY HAD BEEN BUILT BY HAND! FOR SOME REASON THEY GIVE ME THE CREEPS!

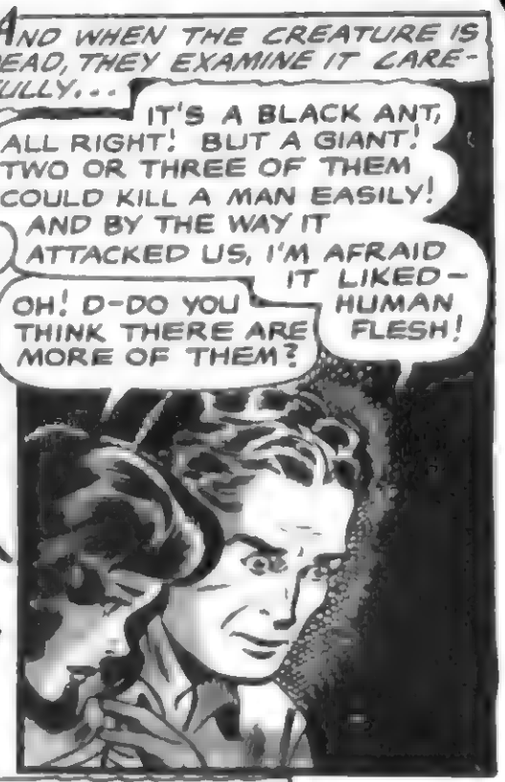
A MOMENT LATER...
L-LOOK! THOSE STRANGE TRACKS IN THE SAND! CLAW-MARKS! I-I DON'T THINK I LIKE THIS ISLAND VERY MUCH!
BUT WE'RE STUCK HERE! MIGHT AS WELL MAKE THE BEST OF IT!

LATER, AS PAT GATHERS FIRE-WOOD...
I WOULDN'T LET LORNA KNOW IT, BUT I'M AS JITTERY AS SHE IS ABOUT THIS PLACE! I FEEL AS THOUGH SOMETHING IS WATCHING US ALL THE TIME—SOMETHING HORRIBLE THAT IS—WAITING!

HARDLY HAS THE MACABRE THOUGHT PASSED THROUGH PAT'S MIND, WHEN HE HEARS LORNA SCREAM...
EEEEEEEEE—PAT! HELP!
GREAT SCOTT! THAT'S LORNA, IN TROUBLE!

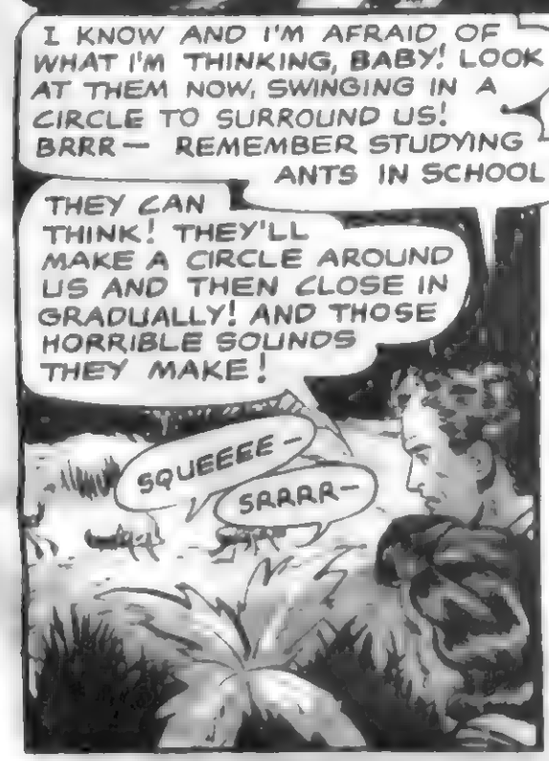
AS HE REACHES THE BEACH, A FANTASTIC SIGHT GREETS HIM...
GOOD GRIEF! LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THAT CREATURE!
AAAA— HELP ME! THEY'RE AFTER ME! GIANT ANTS! H-HORRIBLE!

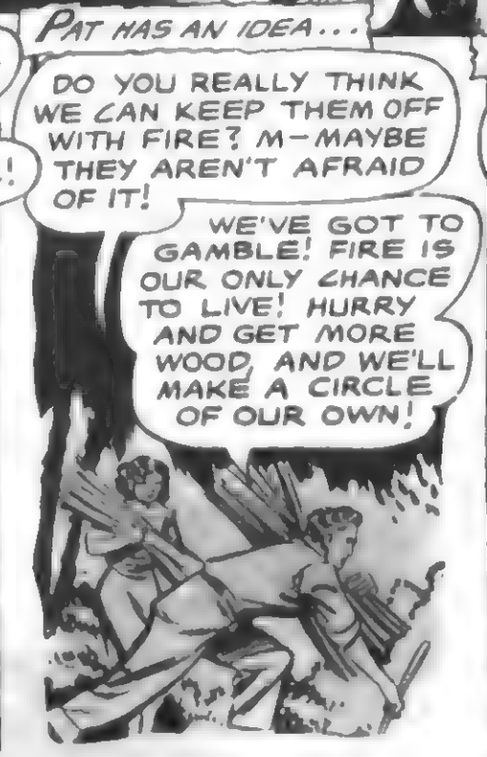
AS PAT FIGHTS THE HUGE BLACK ANT, IT EMITS A SHRILL SNARLING SOUND...
YOU'RE A HORROR, BUSTER, BUT I THINK I CAN HANDLE YOU! I'LL SMASH THAT UGLY BODY OF YOURS TO PULP!
SQUERR-SQUEERRR-

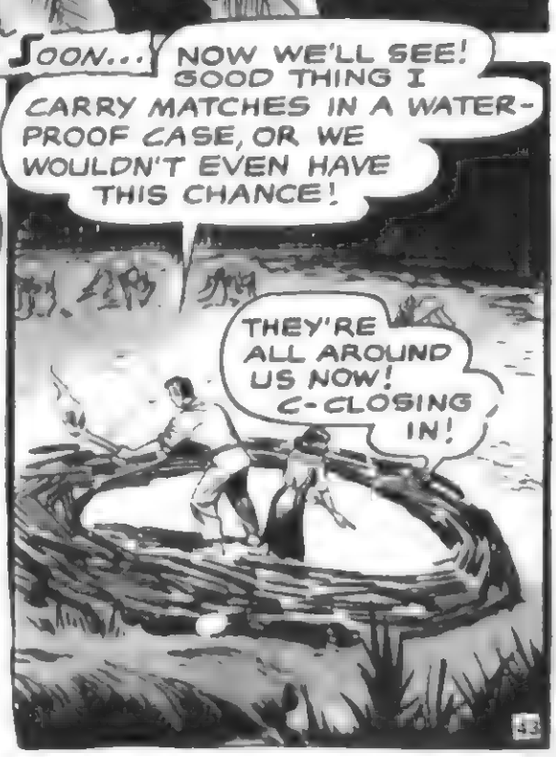

AND WHEN THE CREATURE IS DEAD, THEY EXAMINE IT CAREFULLY...
IT'S A BLACK ANT, ALL RIGHT! BUT A GIANT! TWO OR THREE OF THEM COULD KILL A MAN EASILY! AND BY THE WAY IT ATTACKED US, I'M AFRAID IT LIKED— HUMAN FLESH!
OH! D-DO YOU THINK THERE ARE MORE OF THEM?

SUDDENLY PAT GRABS HER ARM AND BEGINS TO RUN...
PAT! W-WHERE ARE YOU GOING? WHAT'S THE MATTER? IT'S DEAD!
C'MON! I JUST HAD A HORRID THOUGHT! YOU KNOW THOSE DUNES WE SAW? SUPPOSE THEY AREN'T DUNES! SUPPOSE THEY'RE ANT HILLS?

BUT IT IS ALREADY TOO LATE...
OH-OH! I WAS RIGHT! SEE THEM POURING OUT OF THOSE HILLS! THEY KNOW WE'RE HERE NOW AND THEY WANT US!
UGH! SO M-MANY OF THEM! WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO? THEY'LL EAT US ALIVE!


I KNOW AND I'M AFRAID OF WHAT I'M THINKING, BABY! LOOK AT THEM NOW, SWINGING IN A CIRCLE TO SURROUND US! BRRR— REMEMBER STUDYING ANTS IN SCHOOL!
THEY CAN THINK! THEY'LL MAKE A CIRCLE AROUND US AND THEN CLOSE IN GRADUALLY! AND THOSE HORRIBLE SOUNDS THEY MAKE!
SQUEEEE-
SRRRR-


PAT HAS AN IDEA...
DO YOU REALLY THINK WE CAN KEEP THEM OFF WITH FIRE? M-MAYBE THEY AREN'T AFRAID OF IT!
WE'VE GOT TO GAMBLE! FIRE IS OUR ONLY CHANCE TO LIVE! HURRY AND GET MORE WOOD, AND WE'LL MAKE A CIRCLE OF OUR OWN!


SOON...
NOW WE'LL SEE! GOOD THING I CARRY MATCHES IN A WATERPROOF CASE, OR WE WOULDN'T EVEN HAVE THIS CHANCE!
THEY'RE ALL AROUND US NOW! C-CLOSING IN!

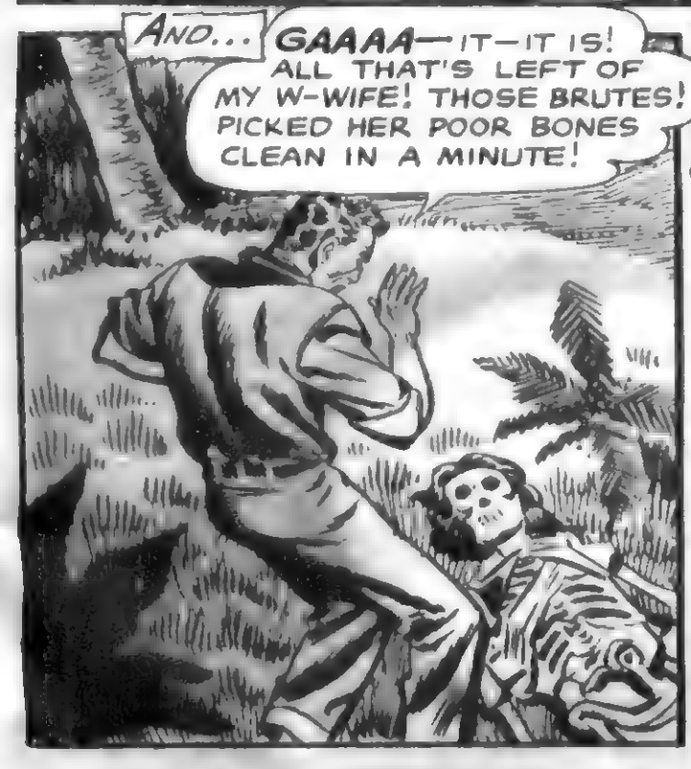
THEY CROUCH INSIDE THE RING OF SEARING FLAME...
OH, THE HEAT! I—(GASP)—CAN'T BREATHE! OH, PAT, I'M SO AFRAID! WE'RE GOING TO—(CHOKE)—D-DIE!
MAYBE NOT! LOOK, THE FIRE HAS STOPPED THEM! NO ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS TO KEEP IT GOING, MAKE THE CIRCLE LARGER!
NIGHT COMES DOWN AND STILL THE ANT MONSTERS WAIT PATIENTLY...
THEY WON'T CROSS THE LINE OF FIRE, BUT THEY WON'T GO AWAY, EITHER! THEY SEEM TO KNOW WE CAN'T ESCAPE!
THOSE EYES! STARING AT US FROM OUT OF THE DARK! IF MORNING WOULD ONLY COME!
BUT WHEN DAWN DOES COME, IT BRINGS A NEW DANGER...
I KNOW WHAT THEY'RE WAITING FOR, LORNA! THEY KNOW WE'RE RUNNING OUT OF WOOD!
THIS IS THE LAST! WE C-CAN'T GET ANY MORE!
SQUEE
SQUEE-
THEN...
PAT, A SHIP! OH, WE'RE SAVED! THEY MUST HAVE SEEN THE SMOKE FROM OUR FIRE! WE'VE BEATEN THOSE CREATURES!
BUT NOT YET...
THE SHIP! TURNING AWAY FROM THE ISLAND! THEY EXPECTED US TO BE ON THE BEACH, NATURALLY, AND THEY MUST THINK THE ISLAND IS DESERTED AFTER ALL!
THEN LET'S GET TO THE BEACH! WE'LL HAVE TO MAKE A RUN FOR IT!
H-HURRY! THE SHIP IS STILL IN SIGHT! IF WE CAN GET TO THE BEACH IN TIME, WE CAN ATTRACTION THEIR ATTENTION YET!
COME ON, THEN! STICK CLOSE TO ME AND USE THAT CLUB AS IF YOUR LIFE DEPENDED ON IT! BECAUSE IT DOES!
BUT INSTANTLY THE FOUL MONSTERS SWARM OVER LORNA...
AEEEEEEEEEEEEE—HELP! THEY'VE GOT ME! AHHHHHHHHHHH—
SQURRRRRRR—SQUEEEEE—
44

THEY PULLED THE CLUB OUT OF MY HAND EEEEEEE! MY L-LEGS! BITTEN SO I CAN'T STAND UP! PAT! D-DON'T LEAVE ME TO THEM! OHHHHH!
I'M COMING, DARLING! AS SOON AS I DRIVE THESE OTHERS AWAY! C-CAN'T FIGHT ALL OF THEM AT ONCE!
SQUEEEEE-
SQUERRR-

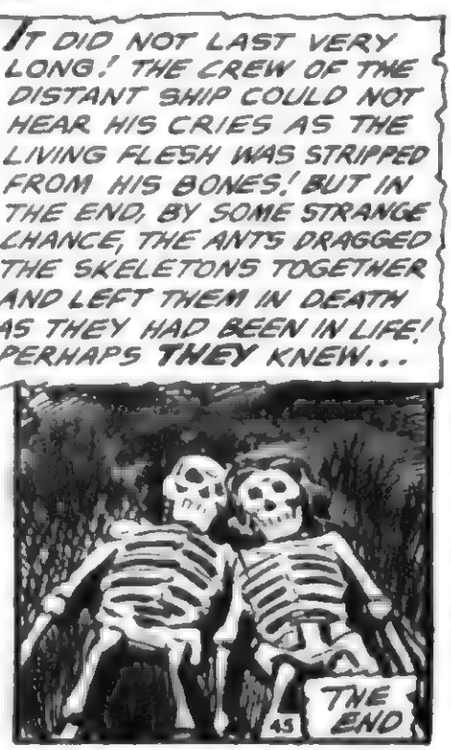
YEEEEEEEEEE! THEY'VE GOT ME! EATING ME ALIVE! D-DON'T LET THEM! AAAAAAAAAAA-
FILTHY CREATURES! I'M COMING, PAT! BE THERE IN A MINUTE! KEEP ON FIGHTING!

BUT...
YOU! BLOCKING ME OFF, KEEPING ME FROM GETTING TO LORNA! I'LL CLUB YOUR FIENDISH BRAINS OUT!
SQUEEEEE-

FINALLY...
LORNA! GREAT SCOTT— WHERE IS SHE? N-NO! NOT UNDER THAT SQUIRMING HEAP! PLEASE DON'T LET LORNA BE IN THERE! PLEASE!


AND...
GAAAA— IT—IT IS! ALL THAT'S LEFT OF MY W-WIFE! THOSE BRUTES! PICKED HER POOR BONES CLEAN IN A MINUTE!

NO LONGER DOES PAT TRY TO ESCAPE! HE TURNS, AND CLUB READY, FACES THE BLACK HORDE THAT CREEPS TOWARD HIM...
C'MON, YOU MURDERING CREATURES! YOU'LL GET ME SURE, BUT I'LL MAKE JELLY OUT OF SOME OF YOU FIRST!


IT DID NOT LAST VERY LONG! THE CREW OF THE DISTANT SHIP COULD NOT HEAR HIS CRIES AS THE LIVING FLESH WAS STRIPPED FROM HIS BONES! BUT IN THE END, BY SOME STRANGE CHANCE, THE ANTS DRAGGED THE SKELETONS TOGETHER AND LEFT THEM IN DEATH AS THEY HAD BEEN IN LIFE! PERHAPS THEY KNEW...
THE END

YOU CANNOT ESCAPE, RICHARD KARINE! COME-- YOU HAVE DELAYED US FOR TOO LONG! AHA, HA, HA!

NO, NO! STOP IT! I--I'LL NOT GO WITH YOU! HELP! HELP!

CALL OF THE MONSTERS

RICHARD KARINE, MYSTERY WRITER, WROTE THE GREATEST HORROR STORY IN HIS CAREER! AND WAS LOCKED IN A DEATH-TRAP, WHEN HE HEARD THE...

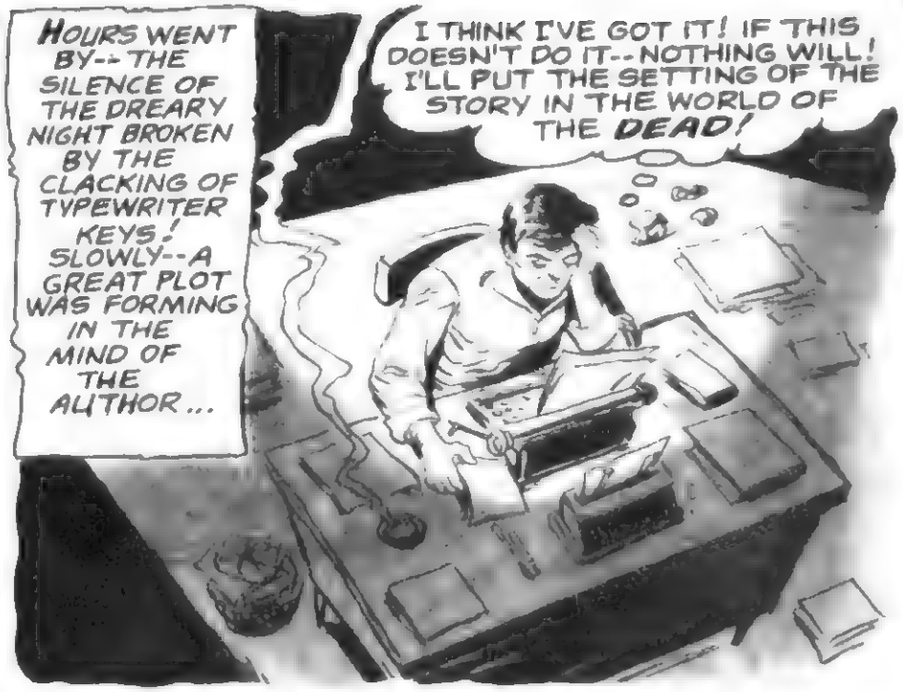
RICHARD KARINE HADN'T BEEN HITTING IT OFF TOO WELL RECENTLY! THIS WAS HIS THIRD REJECT, AND NOW HE WAS WORRIED! PERRY ANNERS, THE EDITOR OF CHILLING TALES LOOKED AT HIM DUBIOUSLY...

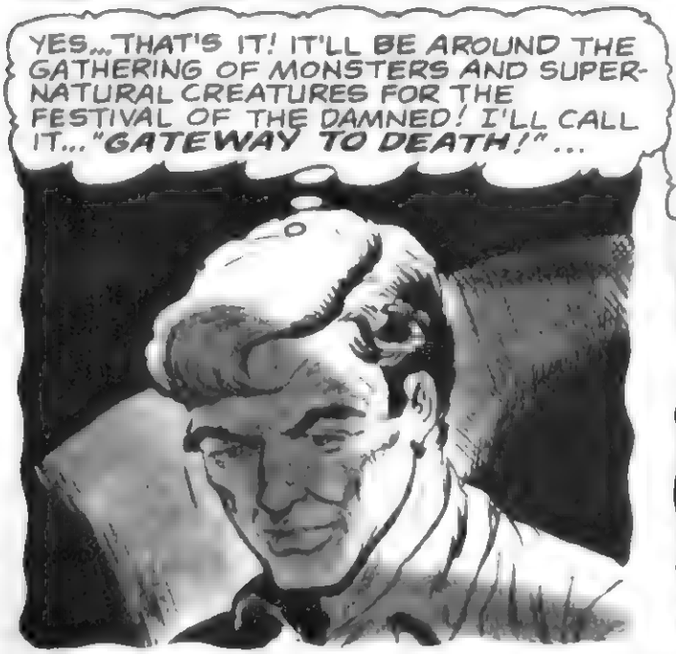
IT'S TERRIBLE, DICK... SIMPLY AWFUL! WHAT'S HAPPENED TO YOU? I CAN'T ACCEPT YOUR SCRIPT... SORRY!

I--I TRIED... I GAVE IT ALL I HAD!

I KNOW YOU DID, FELLA... BUT IT SIMPLY WON'T STAND UP AS A GOOD STORY! LOOK! WHY DON'T YOU LAY OFF THE STUFF YOU'VE BEEN SWILLING ALL THESE MONTHS? WRITE ME SOMETHING CHILLING... REALLY CHILLING!

YEAH! OKAY, PERRY! I WON'T LET YOU DOWN... YOU'LL SEE!

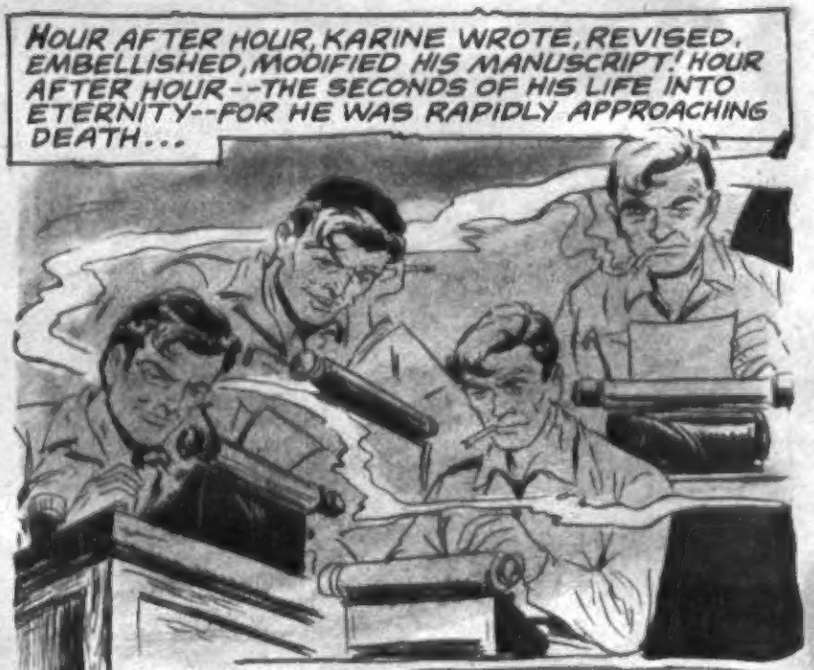




THUS KARINE HAD ACCIDENTALLY STUMBLED ON THE KEY TO THE OTHER WORLD! FOR AS HIS FINGERS FLEW OVER THE KEYS... STRANGE SHAPES AROSE FROM NOWHERE...

AND THERE... RIGHT BEFORE HIS EYES... WAS THE FESTIVAL OF THE DAMNED! THE SETTING THAT HE HAD DESCRIBED WORD FOR WORD IN HIS OWN STORY!
HEE, HEE... DANCE, BROTHERS! MAKE MERRY-- FOR EVIL SHALL RULE ALL SOON! HEE, HEE!
HA, HA, HA! KILL! KILL! GOAT'S BLOOD WE DRINK! MORTAL'S SOULS WE STEAL! HA! HA!
...AND NOW TO WORK! I MAKE THE FIRST OFFERING! I OFFER THE PLEADINGS OF SINNERS! THE WAILS OF MURDERERS, THE EVIL OF SADISTS TO THE EVERCONSUMING FIRE! HA, HA; HA...
FOR WE ARE THE CONSCIENCES OF THOSE WHO HAVE SINNED ON EARTH! HEE, HEE...
WHAT HELLISH EVIL... BUT I KNOW I'LL WAKE UP! HOWEVER, EVEN IN MY DREAMS, I HAVE TO PUT THIS DOWN! A DESCRIPTION OF THIS SPECTACLE WOULD BE THE GREATEST FIND IN MY WRITING CAREER!
BEHOLD! A MORTAL SPIES ON US! A MORTAL HAS BROKEN THE VEIL OF THE OTHER WORLD!
AFTER HIM! TEAR OUT HIS HEART! CLAW OUT HIS EYES... AND EAT HIS LIVER!
AIIEEE! THEY'VE SEEN ME! THIS CAN'T BE REAL... I'VE GOT TO ESCAPE!
DEATH TO HIM! SMOKE HIS CARCASS OVER THE FLAMES!

THE WIND BURNED HIS FACE AS HE FELL. VOICES, MOCKING LAUGHTER, THEN BLACKNESS AND OBLIVION... FOLLOWED BY A REVOLVING BALL WHICH INCREASED TO WHITE VISIBILITY AND FINALLY CONSCIOUSNESS...



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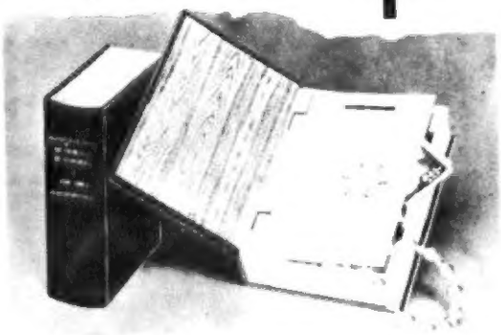

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THEY'RE BEHIND ME ALL THE TIME, THOUGH I CAN'T SEE THEM...ONLY PERRY CAN HELP ME! HE WAS THE ONE WHO STARTED ME ON THIS NIGHTMARE!

ANNERS! LET ME IN! WAKE UP! WAKE UP!

DICK KARINE--! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? WHAT'S THE IDEA OF WAKING ME UP?
PERRY--YOU'VE GOT TO LISTEN TO ME! THEY'RE AFTER ME... ALL THE DEMONS OF HELL! PLEASE...YOU HAVE TO HELP ME! DON'T LET THEM TAKE ME AWAY!

OH--SO THAT'S IT? LOOK, FELLA! I TOLD YOU TO TAKE IT EASY ON THOSE HIGHBALLS! I HAVE NO TIME FOR HUMORING DIPSY-DOODLES! GOODNIGHT! I'LL SEE YOU IN THE MORNING...WHEN YOU'RE SOBER!
NO--DON'T PERRY! YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! IT'S THE TRUTH! I--I SWEAR IT! PERRY!!

HE DIDN'T BELIEVE ME! STAY AWAY! STAY AWAY!!

THE END